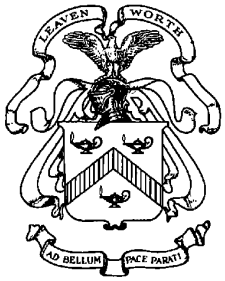
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EDITED BY CAPTAIN RAGNAR G. LIND, AIR CORPS

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MAY 1946

# THE FALCON












COMBAT HISTORY OF THE

## 79th Fighter Group

UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCES

1942—1945

NOT AN OFFICIAL WAR DEPARTMENT PUBLICATION

SEP 3 1947

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# THE INSIGNIA OF THE
# 79TH FIGHTER GROUP

The historians of Ancient Egypt have recorded on their obelisks the story of Horus, the hawk. Some three thousand years ago, these scribes told of a son born to Osirus, one of the gods of the sun. This was Horus, who was orphaned in his youth when Osirus was killed by the sun-god, Set. With manhood, Horus assembled his armies, killed Set, and regained the throne that was rightfully his. The hieroglyphics on the obelisks tell how Horus, the hawk, became known to these ancients as the Avenger of His Father.

It is peculiarly significant that the 79th Fighter Group should carry on the ancient tradition of Horus. The design recalls Egypt, in whose burning skies our aircraft first met the enemy. It suggests that this land of history and sand was the beginning of the British Eighth Army's march up the Western Desert Road to Tunis, and to victory. It points to the role played by the 79th in this victory, as they fought with Montgomery and his men. Finally, it is a tribute to Colonel Peter McGoldrick, Group Commander, the first member of the Group to die in combat.

Horus, the hawk, symbolizes the determination of the 79th Fighter Group to avenge, like Horus, the death of their brilliant leader. With the speed of the hawk, they will dive out of the sun and strike with the swift deadliness of the cobra, and their deeds, like those of Horus of Egypt, will be recorded with the immortals.

The significance of the component parts of the design is as follows. The blue strip at the top of the insignia is the Egyptian representation of the sky, symbolic of the medium in which our planes operate. Below this, and in the upper left corner are the Egyptian numerals for "79", the numerical designation of our group. The inverted "U"-shaped characters each represent ten; the straight lines, one; hence 79. In the upper right hand corner is a device always seen in connection with any depiction of a sun-god. First the red sun, suggesting the origin of these gods, and also symbolic of the fact that fighters frequently dive on an enemy from out of the sun. Hanging over the sun is a uraeus, or cobra, shown to represent the fact that the gods were protected, and thus symbolic of one function of fighter aircraft, namely, protection. Also symbolized are the qualities of deadliness, swiftness, and death to the enemy, which are characteristics of the cobra. Suspended from the neck of the serpent is the Egyptian Key of Life, which was always shown with a god to symbolize immortality. The Key of Life also may symbolize good fortune, a charm to bring good luck. The hawk or falcon is the chief figure in the design, and is the symbolic representation of the sun-god, Horus. Its form is typically Egyptian, standing dominant, erect and fearless, the symbol of swift flight, unerring aim, strength, endurance, winged skill, and destruction of its prey. These qualities are all symbolic of the same qualities in the fighter planes of the Group, of those who fly them, and of those who keep them flying.

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TO THOSE

WHO NEVER RETURNED

WHO GAVE THEIR YOUTH

AND BLOOD WITH TRUSTFUL FAITH

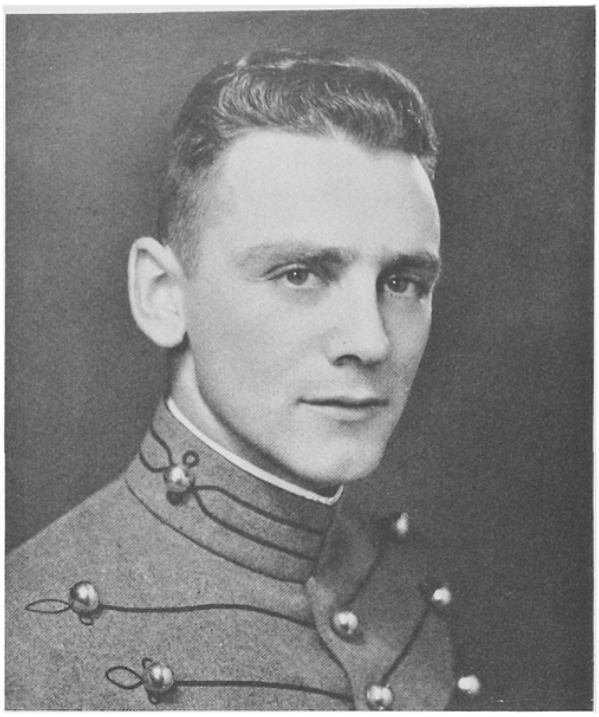
IN THE HOPE OF ENDING

"MAN'S INHUMANITY TO MAN"



# Group Commanders

# IN GRATEFUL MEMORY



## LIEUTENANT-COLONEL PETER McGOLDRICK

COMMANDING OFFICER

FROM JULY TO NOVEMBER 1942

While the Group was en route overseas, Colonel McGoldrick flew combat with the 57th Fighter Group that he might gain all possible tactical knowledge to pass on to the arriving 79th Pilots.

On November 6, 1942, six P-40's made a strafing-run on a German Convoy near Charing Cross, Egypt. One P-40, flown by Col. McGoldrick, making a second "pass" at the convoy, was hit by the intense ground fire. Forced into an emergency landing, Col. McGoldrick was killed when his aircraft struck a land-mine. His death was deeply felt by every member of the 79th Fighter Group.

*" . . but there is lent*
*To man the wisdom of a high despair,*
*When such can die, and he live on and linger here."*

*—SHELLEY*

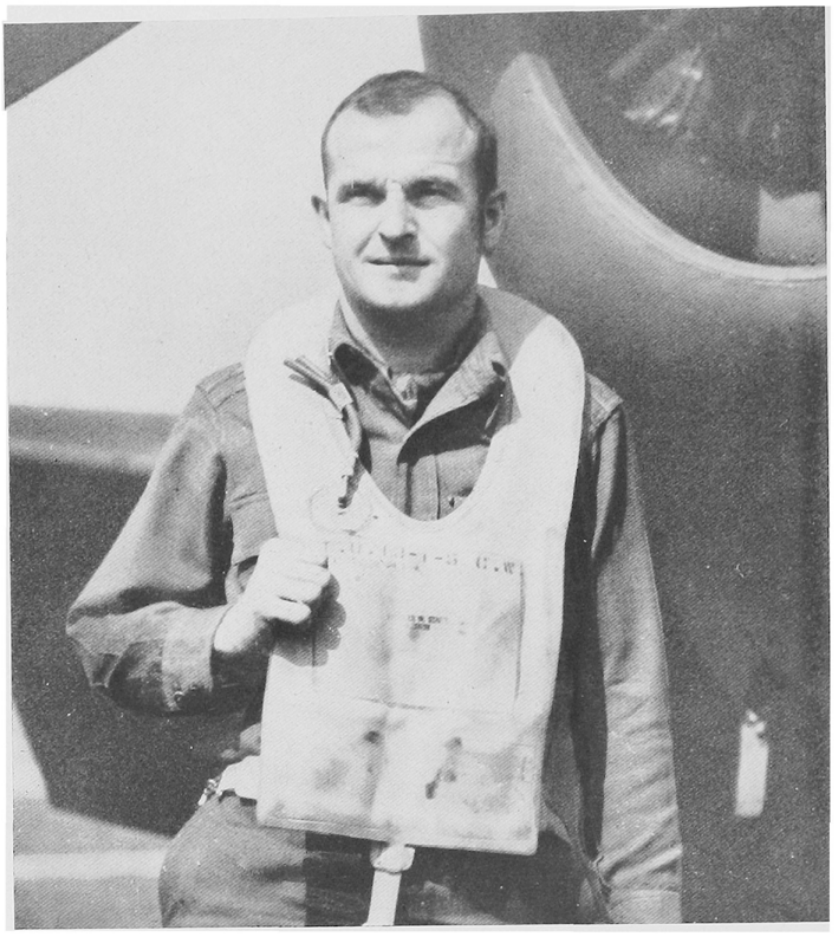



COLONEL EARL E. BATES

GROUP COMMANDER

FROM NOVEMBER 1942 TO APRIL 1944

D. F. C.
Legion of Merit
Air Medal with 5 OLC's
British D. F. C.



## COLONEL CHARLES W. STARK

GROUP COMMANDER APRIL-MAY 1944

MISSING IN ACTION 7 MAY 1944

UNOFFICIALLY REPORTED PRISONER OF WAR IN GERMANY

D F. C.
Air Medal



## LIEUTENANT-COLONEL MELVIN J. NIELSEN

IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO

GROUP COMMANDER

FROM 8 MAY 1944 TO 27 NOVEMBER 1944

D. F. C. with O. L. C.
Air Medal with OLC's
British D. F. C.
"The Order of the Division"
(Croix de Guerre with Silver Star)



## COLONEL GLADWYN E. PINKSTON

ROCHESTER, N.Y.

GROUP COMMANDER

FROM 28 NOVEMBER 1944 TO 16 MAY 1945

Silver Star
D. F. C.
Bronze Star
Air Medal with 2 OLC's



## LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHN F. MARTIN

CULPEPER, VA.

DEPUTY GROUP COMMANDER, JULY 1944 TO MAY 1945

GROUP COMMANDER, FROM 17 MAY 1945—CONTINUING

Silver Star
D. F. C. with 3 OLC's
Soldiers Medal
Bronze Star
Air Medal with 14 OLC's
British D. F. C. with Bar

# *This is How it Was...*

The 79th Fighter Group first "taxied out" on February 9, 1942 as a part of the 81st Pursuit Group which, in turn, was a cadre of the 56th Pursuit Group, at Morris Field, Charlotte, North Carolina. While there, the Group was redesignated the 79th on April 28, 1942. Lt. Colonel Peter McGoldrick was its first Commanding Officer; Major Earl E. Bates its Operations Officer. The Group left Charlotte, and the 3rd Air Force, on June 25 to join the 1st Air Force in New England.

On a rainy night, July 2, 1942, the 79th Fighter Group moved into a grassy orchard next to a farm house at Bedford, Mass. A barn cleared of cattle and swallows, but not of cobwebs, served as Headquarters. In those days all squadrons were not at one field. 85 and Hq. were at Bedford, 86 at Hillsgrove, R. I., and 87 at Hartford, Conn. A temperamental WACO flew between the spots as an actual link of communication.

Bedford seemed at first just a sleepy village adjacent to Paul Revere's Concord and Lexington, but proved very hospitable, and our stay was both pleasant and beneficial. The new "sports" checked out in P-40's and flew training missions daily. One or two Coastal intercepts became actual operations. In a short time, the 79th Fighter Group was ready for overseas duty.

Sunday afternoon, September 27, was much like any other Sunday afternoon with the usual rumors floating about like autumn leaves. "We were not going to move out of the country; we were a static defense group; we were going out any day, anyhow; we were going to England—Egypt—Iceland—the Far East".

Many of us, that Sunday afternoon, suffered from the usual daze following Saturday night. Some of the younger officers were entertaining friends in the nearby farmhouse. High balls, ice, sandwiches made an attractive table. Then word came that Lt. Col. McGoldrick wanted his staff to gather in the barn. The social life of the 79th Fighter Group, made up of blouses and pinks, G. I. coats and well pressed trousers, shined shoes and polished brass, had ended. We were on our way.

There have been many descriptions of troop trains, but to anyone embarking on one, certain features become indelible. It rained the night we left Bedford and the puddles cast an eerie reflection in the semi-blackout. Good-byes were hasty, tightlipped. First sergeants barked names and the "HO's" rang out across the night.

Most of the men found good spirits on the train, preserved and otherwise. Songs of the last war carried through the car,—the only time, except at a desert Xmas party, those old songs returned. Most of the World War II boys prefer "White Christmas" to "Tipperary". The Mademoiselle from Armentieres is a forgotten gal, a memory only to the soldiers of the last war who recall her more reverently or jealously than we.

The 79th Group, with all three Squadrons exclusive of pilots, left the train on 29 September at Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, home ground of the Pennsylvania



. . we set up first Headquarters in a little red barn at Bedford, Mass.

National Guard, now a staging area for assorted fighting units. On our honor, we were restricted to the post.

P. O. E.

After interminable planning, discussing, and issuing of equipment needed for the war zone, another train on October 5, carried the Group to Hampton Roads, near Norfolk, Va.

With great pleasure we identified our transport as the "Mauretania", former Cunard luxury liner. She still bore her name on the bow.

Beneath the glass roof of a long rectangular shed the 79th assembled. Loaded with barracks bags, rifles, and musette bags, without fanfare or flourish, most of the men in need of shaves and weary from a sleepless night on a troop train, the Group embarked.

"LONG VOYAGE OUT..."

When the "Mauretania" left Hampton Roads the morning of October 7, she left alone. For 37 days she sailed alone, changing course and direction nearly every fifteen minutes to baffle the submarine's range finders. Along the coast of North America, southwards from the Virginia capes, lay a graveyard of Allied merchantmen. Here for 48 hours was aerial escort by Lockheed Hudsons, Catalinas, and white camouflaged Fortresses. The sun shone bright and the sea was smooth.

From the North American coastal waters the "Mauretania" entered the treacherous Caribbean. Rumor had marked every latitude as the spot of a recent torpedoing. Every night buzzed with tales of enemy submarines. The Caribbean did not relieve the tension that held everyone; the "Mauretania" was definitely an Iron Cross for any "sub" commander. After ten days we saw a strip of land, a bit of green—Brazil. Germanbuilt aircraft, with Brazilian markings, flew over us, the irregular whoom-whoom of the non-synchronized engines easily discernible. We anchored at Rio.

There was no blackout at Rio and the lights in the evening reflected the broad avenues, modern apartments, inviting bars. All was clear to the naked eye, clearer and more tantalizing through binoculars. A gay fiesta beckoned beneath the religious relic on the mountain, yet no one was permitted to leave the ship. An outmoded destroyer, manned by the Brazilian navy, circled for two days, never stopping, screening us with thick black smoke. Tenders refueled us while some of the boys with the beginning of international bargaining that crosses any linguistic barriers bought dwarfed South American cigars and brandy from the crews.

On the morning of October 20, we sailed again. We all knew it was for Africa, but what part, and then where? Life steadied. During these warm sunny days and starry nights it was impossible to believe we were at war. We almost thought we'd won a contest, or a raffle, with the cruise as a prize. Suddenly the weather changed. The wind blew and the ship rolled in mountainous seas. There were snow flurries and graceful Arctic terns swept lazily over the stern. From suntans into woolens, all the troops changed quickly. You wondered just how long a life boat or raft could withstand the battering of that sea. Someone told us we were going so far south, well into the roaring forties, to avoid a submarine pack which had torpedoed a convoy off the African Cape. That evening, news of the torpedoing came over the radio.

SHORE LEAVE

Then warm weather again. On the 30th of October, the "Mauretania" slipped past gun emplacements, guarded by Empire troops, and anchored alongside the piers of Durban, Union of South Africa. For forty-eight hours all troops enjoyed shore leave. They call Durban the convoy city. No place on earth could have been more hospitable. It made little difference whether you were Maori, Aussie, Tommy or Yank. All troopships, from both hemispheres, stopped at South Africa on the way around. There were plenty of invitations for all.

We left Durban November first, put out along the "roads" escorted by two sleek destroyers, and then "put in" again while coastal batteries fired on an unidentified submarine and the destroyers dropped depth char-

ges. Then out to sea again to enter the Indian Ocean, smooth and translucent, almost without ripples.

Madagascar had been occupied and Fighting Frenchmen side by side with British soldiers fought Vichy. We went through the Mozambique Channel, close enough to Madagascar to see the gun flashes of what was to be the decisive battle. Thence up the coast of Africa into the Red Sea.

At this time we'd heard about the push begun in North Africa, the beginnings at Alamein, which were to develop into the first great Allied victory of the war. Names like the Highland Div., Green Harrods, Kents Rifles, Indian Div., came across the wireless. These were part of the 8th Army to whom we were going to give air support. Colonel McGoldrick was at Alamein and gave his life at Charing Cross.

We saw Aden, the hell hole of the R. A. F. with no rainfall and a perpetual heat wave of searing, depressing humidity. We saw the barren shores of Arabia with ugly rock formations turned into castles of the "thousand and one nights" in the deceptive twilight. Two more days cruising and we landed at Port Tewfik, Egypt, on November 12, after 37 days at sea.

### AIR ECHELON

Only the ground personnel went by boat. Certain department heads with their section chiefs had planned to fly, but last moment changes cancelled the deal. After the Group left Bedford, the pilots reported to Grenier Field, Manchester, N. H., stayed until October 22, then left for Miami, Florida. Not all the pilots flew on together, but we can consider the chronological aspect of one unit.

On October 23, at 3 A. M., via C-54, the unit went on to Natal, Brazil, stopping at Porto Rico and British Guiana en route. It arrived at Natal on October 25. On the 28th, in a Pan-American Clipper, it took off for Fisher-man's Lake, Liberia. Then on the next day, the pilots arrived at a P-40 assembly plant at Accra. From there they flew the usual ferry route into Cairo Aerodrome at Heliopolis. Usually the P-40's where shepherded by a Lockheed or Boston (A-20) for navigation purposes.

### TACTICAL SITUATION

The British 8th Army had made a stand at El Alamein, its lines extending from the sea coast to the Quattara Depression. Montgomery had decided to smash the Hun instead of establishing static lines of defense. The 57th Fighter Group had sailed during the summer of 1942 to lend fighter support to the hard working RAF units. 12th Medium Bombardment Group with its B-25's and the 98th Heavy Bombardment Group of B-24's together with some B-17's were hammering the Panzer divisions. Certain personnel of the 79th Fighter Group flew with the 57th. Lt. Colonel McGoldrick, Major Uhrich, Capt. Turner, Major Schoellkopf and Capt. Cimaglia participated. Finally Squadron C. O.'s, Operations Officers and Flight Leaders added combat experience to their training. Lt. Say, of the 85th Squadron on DS with the 64th Sqdn., 57th Group, received credit for damaging an ME.-109 while on a bomber escort Dec. 8, 1942, drawing "first blood" for the 79th Group. Lt. Abbott, also of the 85th, wounded while fighting with the 57th Group, was first to receive the Purple Heart.

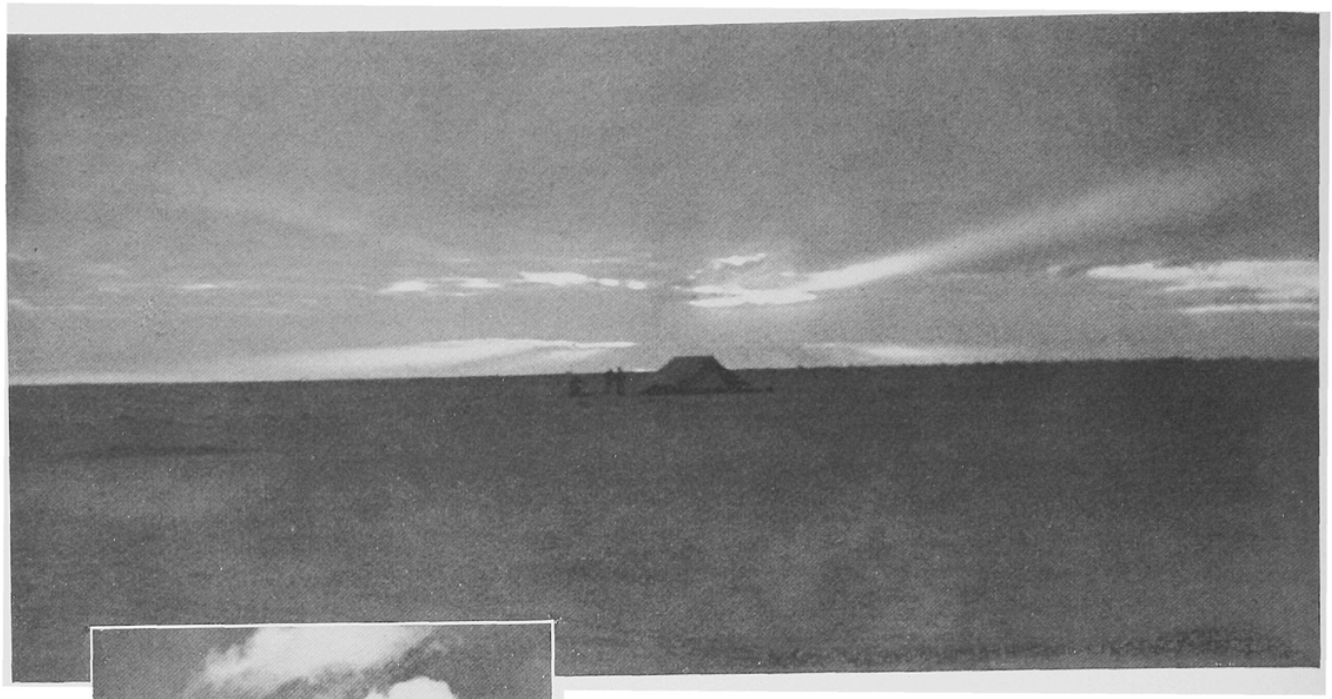
The 79th ground echelon went by train from Port Tewfik to a RAF transit camp at Kasfareet, near Great Bitter Lake, on the Suez Canal. For the first time we saw Wellingtons, Wimpys, Spitfires, Hurricanes, jet black night fighters; and we felt the disturbance of sand under our collars and in our trousers. Officers and enlisted men alike slept on concrete floors, with two blankets. Here one ate the most impossible food ever encountered. Camel meat, peculiar tasteless vegetables, scrawny tomatoes, and figs of all sorts. Sulky, unscrubbed, ill-looking natives (to be called "wogs") served us.

### L. G. 174

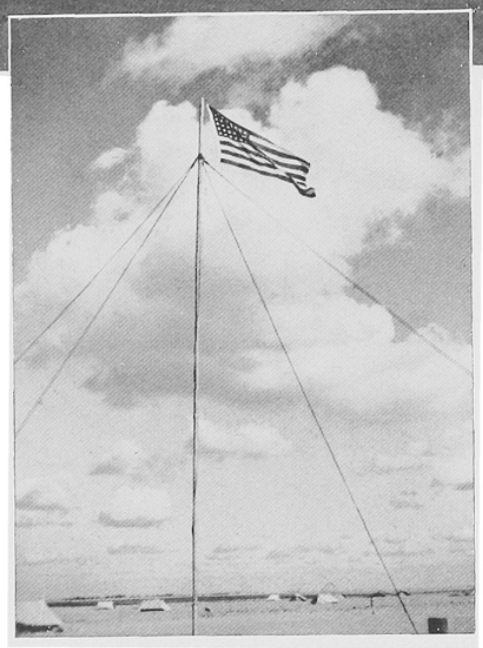
After an all night train ride on Nov. 16, we arrived at Amirya, about 30 miles from Alexandria. Trucks drove us to the Landing Ground, a wild flat bit of land. And



*After 37 days at sea we left the Mauretania at Port Tewfik without regret*



L. G. 174 . . .



*Where the 79th Colors were first flown on foreign soil . . .*

we arrived in the midst of a sandstorm. During our stay at L. G. 174, we experienced a dozen sandstorms in two and a half months.

At "174" we formed the Group as a combat outfit. Many of the fliers had been with the 57th Fighter Group taking their baptism of fire in the air, fighting from Alamein to Agheila. Intelligence and operations officers had also moved up at intervals to see how war in the desert was fought. Supplies had to be obtained, trucks requisitioned and rosters completed. We were part of the 9th Air Force, United States Army Air Forces in the Middle East.

## Egypt to Tripole

On the morning of January 27 we began what was to be our long trek across the deserts of Egypt, Libya and Tunisia. On the initial lap we passed El Daba, Mersa Matruh, Tobruk, finally pitching camp at Gazala, or LG 150. Italian caves gave warm quarters to some of the boys. The aircraft flew in one afternoon with sand blowing and visibility poor. Again the pilots flew training missions. The waiting was becoming very difficult, everyone wanted to begin his real job.

As the Main Army advanced across Africa we followed as a reserve unit, still out of fighter range. The fighter command was bringing us along slowly and painfully, for the next LG occupied, on Feb. 6th was Darraugh North, at the end of several mine fields. A blinding sandstorm held us there in convoy for two days, then we saw the wilderness we'd come to. The entire Libyan desert has no more forlorn a region than the lands around Beni Ulid. Trackless wastes with hidden mines, desert tracks obscured in an hour by the winds. At last we thought we were going to fight because the Germans were putting up a stubborn rearguard action.

Tripoli fell and the 8th Army moved on its way into Tunisia. On March first, the 79th, on the heels of the British Army went to Castel Benito, Mussolini's publiciz-

ed project 15 miles from Tripoli. From Castel Benito an advance party moved into Zuara awaiting an abortive thrust of Rommel's tanks. Tank-busting Hurricanes dealt summarily with the situation, however.

CAUSEWAY L. G.

All was excitement as the fledgling 79th Hawks arrived at Causeway L. G., Tunisia, on March 13, knowing now it was going to fight. This was the moment, the reason for all the preparation and waiting.

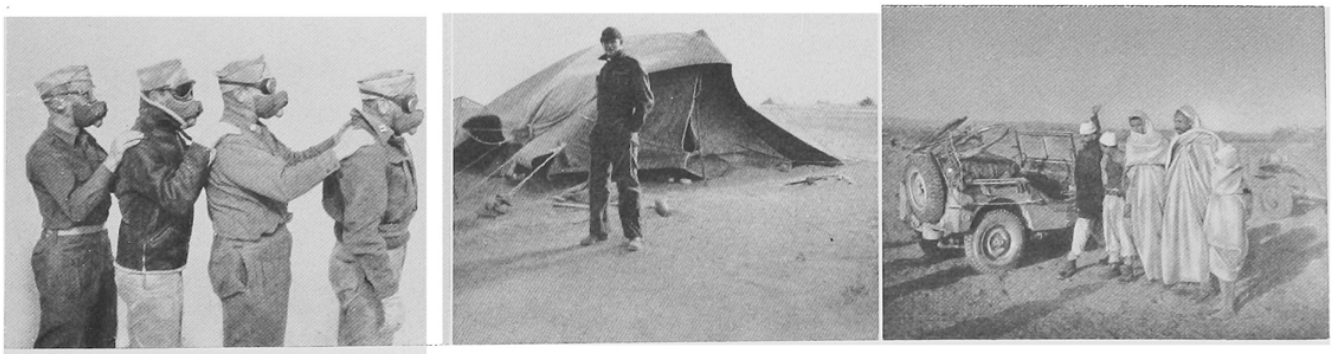
Causeway was a flat, semi-tidal sandspit jutting out toward picturesque Isle de Dierba, overlooking the glassy Bay of Bou Grara. After tedious months of training, 15,000 miles by sea and 1500 dusty weary miles across the desert, we were about to go into action against the enemy "on our own" and participate in the final campaign to destroy Rommel's famous Army. Though still an integral part of Brig. General Strickland's 9th Fighter Command and Major General Brereton's' 9th Air Force, which controlled us administratively from Cairo and Tripoli, we were under direct tactical command of 211 Group, R. A. F., part of the Western Desert Air Force, commanded by Air Vice Marshal Broadhurst. W. D. A. F. was, in turn, under Air Marshal Cunningham who operated as the team-mate of General Sir Bernard L. Montgomery of the British 8th Army. We had already picked up from our 8th Army comrades the habit of affectionately calling the hero of Alamein—"Monty".

The Squadrons huddled on the flat around the perimeter of the landing ground, dispersed among the sand dunes while Group Hq. moved back and pitched its tents in an olive grove on high ground a mile away. Slit trenches were dug, our British Anti-aircraft batteries placed and after telephone communications were hastily established with higher command, we were ready for orders to go on our first mission.

MARETH OPERATIONS

They came quickly. Our first mission, escorting 11 B-25's which bombed German gun positions in the Mareth Line, was carried out smoothly by 12 P-40's each from 85th and 87th Squadrons on March 14, without enemy interference. Warming quickly to their work, the Hawks ran a string of 32 similar missions, totalling 590 sorties, in the next ten days, escorting American flown B-25's, British and South African flown Bostons and Baltimores with great success against the Mareth Line. No bombers had been lost to enemy fighters but we had been saddened by the loss of Lt. Melvin K. Davis of the 85th, missing on March 21. Lt. Bolack of the 85th had been shot down by enemy Ack-Ack on March 21, but belly-landed behind our lines and returned safely. We had our first brushes with enemy fighters and Lt. Adair of the 87th and Lt. Maxwell of the 86th each shot down an ME. 109 on March 22d and 23rd respectively. Lt's. Liggett and McArthur of 87 shared an ME. 109 probable; Lt. Simpson and Capt. Cimaglia of the 85th each contributed 1 damaged. It was a good start, and evidenced the superior pre-battle training given the Group.

On March 22, we were eye-witnesses to the tragic end of a B-25 of the 12th Bomb Group, which we had been escorting on a mission over Mareth. Struck by Ack-Ack, it was limping home from target, escorted by 2 of our fighters, when it suddenly plunged out of control and crashed 2 miles from our camp. Its bombs blew up in the crash and all 6 of its gallant crew were instantly killed. Our friends of the 12th sent over a delegation for the funeral, conducted with full military honors by the 79th Group. It was our first funeral at the



*. . . and where Baker, Bates, Hoffman, and Callahan masked their feelings about the sand-storms . . . . . the first of which S/Sgt. Braswell, and British tent, weathered quite well. . . . and "Wogs" were every where.*

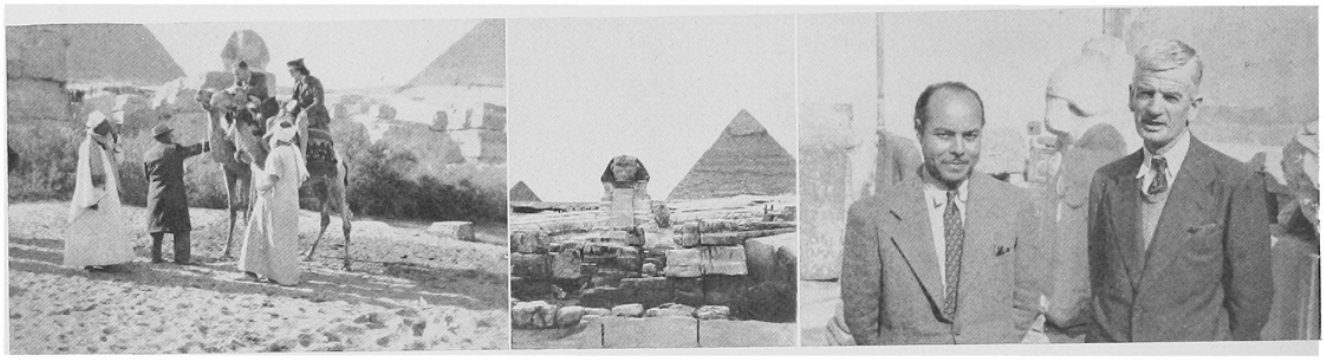
ALEXANDRIA

and

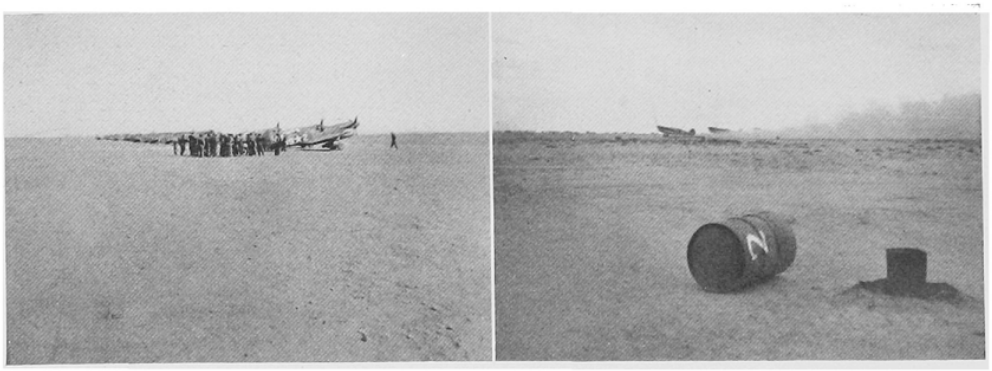
CAIRO

offered fun and education





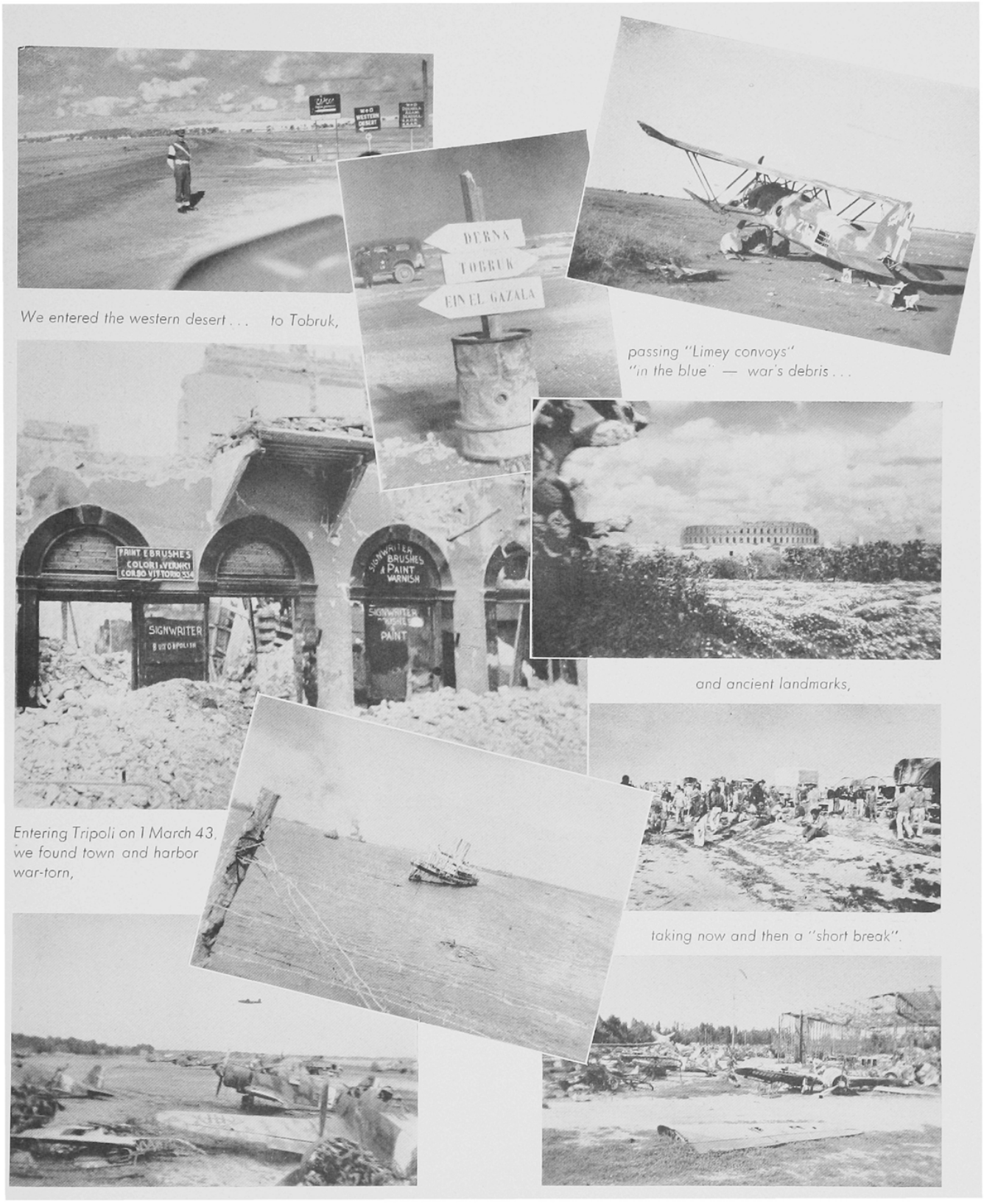
And these two friends helped design the falcon emblem



But mostly we worked and prepared.

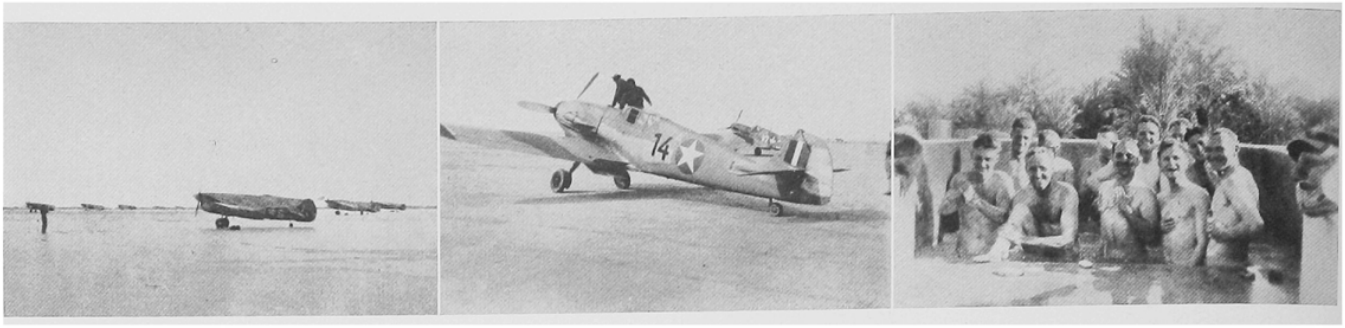
front, and as the crash of rifles was followed by the slow, solemn notes of "Taps" on the bugle, every member of the 79th present felt that he was rendering honor as well to our own fallen comrades.

By March 25, General Montgomery had his famed New Zealanders poised to make their historic sweep around the Mareth Line to flank the Germans. The 79th was called on to support his feint to the north that day and was ordered out on that most hazardous mission of all for our fighter pilots—strafing enemy ground troops from an altitude of but a few feet. They did great damage to the enemy but lost Lt. F. T. Johnson, of the 85th, who was missing. Lt. Johnson was later reported by the Germans, as safe, a prisoner of war. Meanwhile the gallant New Zealanders had made a good start in their dash for Gabes to cut off Rommel's escape, but had been stalled by an immense concentration of German 88 millimeter guns on heights South of El Hamma. These guns had to be knocked out or silenced for at least 2½ hours to allow "N Zeds"




*and Mussolini's proud Castel-Benito airdrome a mass of wrecked axis planes and gutted hangars.*

time to arrive and neutralize them if this crucial battle was to be won. This herculean task was assigned to the Desert Air Task Force consisting of the U. S. 57th, 79th, and 324th Fighter Groups and 322nd, 239th, 244th and 7th South African Wings of the R. A. F. Between them they undertook to maintain a continuous stream of straf-



*Causeway, a semi-tidal flat, was allergic to high tides*

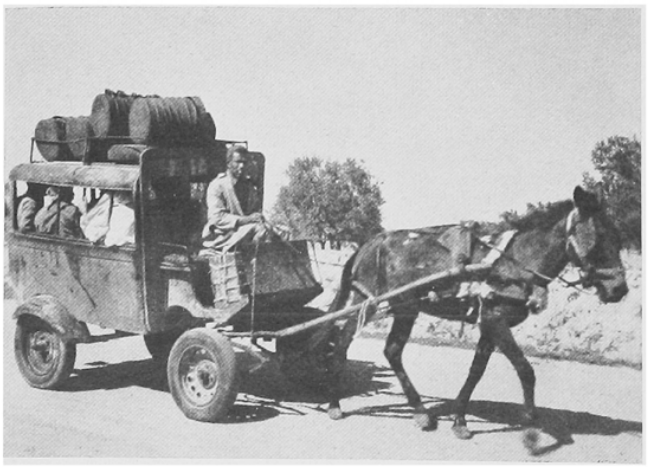
*This captured Me-109 provided research*

*. . . near-by sulphur baths provided luxury*

ers over the enemy gun area for 2½ hours. The 79th drew the deadly middle period, without the demoralization of the enemy enjoyed by the last or the benefit of surprise to be had in the initial period. They would be waiting for us and still full of fight. Our pilots, called together on a sand dune in the sun, where briefed personally by Air Vice Marshal Broadhurst just before the take-off on March 26. He explained the careful plan laid down to prevent a tragic slaughtering of our own advancing New Zealand comrades and the enormous bearing of our missions on the course of the battle and the whole North African campaign. He called for our utmost effort and he got it.

"ALL OUT" FOR "MONTY"

The 79th Hawks roared up and down the road, showering the "88" gun positions with 50-caliber bullets in spite of deadly hail of small arms fire thrown up at them. Some pilots made the suicidal run again and again. Flesh and blood could not stand such an attack. The 88's were silenced during that critical 2½ hours, the New Zealanders broke through and forced the Germans to retire in disorder from the Mareth Line and beyond the Gabes Gap; the battle was a brilliant success. The objective justified serious losses but the hearts of the Hawks were heavy when Lt's David H. Brown, Arthur J. Weldon, Robert Spurgin of the 86th, and Robert E. Liggett of the 87th Sqdn., did not return that day. Major Delaney, commanding officer of the 316 Sqdn., was wounded in the leg but belly-landed at a friendly airdrome. Word was received, through the Catholic church, that Lt's Brown and Weldon were prisoners of war in Germany. Lt. John Hoagland of the 85th Sqdn., his motor shot out by ground fire, belly-landed safely in no man's land, was picked up by New Zealanders and sent safely back to his Squadron thus becoming a member of the "Late Arrivals Club". Capt. Borsodi, likewise hit by flak, bailed out of his disabled plane, floated to earth through a terrific artillery barrage and was also returned safely by the New Zealanders. The Group put on other and more spectacular shows, but El Hamma will always remain its outstanding contribution to



*. . . and the "Zarzis Express" was always good for a laugh.*



*Gimme bom-bom? Shug? Choong gom?*



*Air Vice-Marshal Broadhurst briefed us personally before the El Hamma "Show"*

the North African Campaign. This is evidenced by the following commendation received from General Montgomery, dated March 27, 1943:

"It is unnecessary for me to say how proud I am of the magnificent effort which was made by all units of the operation. There is no doubt it was a major contribution to the path of the Eighth Army in their attack on the Mareth position and I would like commanders to convey to all their pilots my appreciation of their effort also I would like to convey to you my great appreciation of the superb support to the land battle that has been given by the Air Forces yesterday, and in fact every day since this battle started. Such intimate and close support has not been to my knowledge achieved before and it has been an inspiration to all troops. The results have been first class. In sincerely trust you have not suffered many losses. Please convey to all commanders and all pilots the grateful thanks of myself and the whole army for their truly magnificent effort".

The Hun was now definitely on the run and the 79th Hawks harried his retreat to the line he had prepared along the Wadi Akarit. Besides bomber escort missions in the interim, 2 more strafing attacks were launched on March 29 which cost the enemy scores of trucks, guns and light tanks destroyed, and personnel casualties in



*The first to come back stood around "sweating out" the others.*

the hundreds. We lost Capt. Kenneth D. Boggs, Assistant Group Operations Officer who was killed and Lt. Harlan E. Highfield of the 87th Sqdn., who was shot down behind enemy lines by ground fire, and was later reported a prisoner of war in Germany. Capt. Boggs was buried beside his plane, which was later identified by the Coldstream Guards, while pursuing the beaten enemy.

From March 30 to April 16 the Hawks flew 415 sorties escorting the mediums which were pounding the enemy's strong position along the Wadi Akarit. It was on one of these missions, when attacked in force by the Messerschmitts, that Lt. McDonnel, of the 87th (Skeeters) was shot down on April 2, bailed out over the Gulf of Gabes and was never seen again. His comrades of the 87th returned again and again to search the area but found only his empty parachute floating on the sea. In the same fight, with 10 plus ME's, Lt. Jaslow, of the 87th, shot down an ME. 109 and Lt's Watkins and Lee, of the same Squadron, each got one damaged to their credit.

### WADI AKARIT

On April 6, General "Monty" launched a frontal attack on Von Arnim's Wadi Akarit position near the sea and once again the Hawks were called on to strafe a path through for the Highland Division. The attack was delivered with precision and utmost courage by the 86th and 316th Squadrons in the face of the same terrific ground fire encountered at El Hamma. Once more the roads behind the enemy's lines were littered with burning trucks, tanks and armored cars, but this time the Highlanders were unable to pierce the extensive mine fields and strong points along the Wadi, and the enemy held. Once more the brave Hawks paid the price of strafing for the 86th Squadron lost Lt's George I. Harris, Ober N. Leatherman and Donald McKay, and the 316th lost Lt. George W. Gilpin. Lt. Gilpin's and Lt. Leatherman's graves were later found by their wrecked planes. Lt. Harris and McKay were missing.

Seventeen more bomber escort missions followed in the next two days, a total of 240 sorties directed at further softening the enemy's Akarit positions and maintaining our control of the air. On April 8, the 8th Army struck again, a quick thrust around the left flank similar to that at El Hamma with the Indian Division spearheading. A synchronised attack by the American 2nd Corps was launched on Gafsa with the objective of making contact with the 8th Army and helping the latter flank the Afrika Corps out of the Wadi Akarit position. The 79th was to support by strafing the enemy's transport and artillery in the rear. The task was assigned to the 85th, 87th and 316th Squadrons with the 86th flying top cover. The Hawks pressed the attack home with the same fury as at El Hamma choking the roads in the enemy's rear with flaming trucks and armored cars and annihilating many gun crews. The 79th had again done its work well but the 85th Squadron lost Lt. Ralph L. Lind, whose plane exploded in midair, and Lt. Thomas S. Anderson who got back to our lines, severely wounded.

The battle proved another brilliant success for "Monty". Contact was at last established with the American Army, and the outflanked Germans were forced to abandon Wadi Akarit position hastily to escape being bottled up by the Indian Division whose attack carried on through the coast beyond Sfax. The enemy was driven so fast that the 79th found itself far in the rear, out of effective range from the bomb line. Therefore, after running several armed recce missions above Sfax, on the 13th its A and B parties moved forward by bounds to La Fauconnerie airdrome, arriving there on the 14th, just 3 days after its evacuation by the Germans. The L. G. bore mute evidence of the terrible pounding given it by the U. S. 12th Air Force, in the form of a litter of wrecked Messerschmitts. The Group operated at Fauconnerie from April 15 through the 18, running a series of 20 missions escorting minesweepers clearing lanes for our shipping into the newly taken harbors of Sfax and Sousse.

### KAIROUAN

Meanwhile, the U. S. and British Armies had continued pressing the enemy's retreat to his last strong position at Enfidaville and the Hawks again found themselves far in the rear, out of range. On April 18th, the Group accordingly moved to Hani L. G. in an alfalfa field just outside the picturesque Arab Holy City of Kairouan. Here, in this hot, bug infested and treeless flat, the men already began to miss the swimming and pleasant shade of the olive groves back at Causeway. They missed the interesting little trips, by boat, over to the picturesque Island of Djerba where the principal town was Hount Souk, full of French refugees and landmarks of ancient Roman and Jewish culture. Most of all, they missed the refreshing luxury of the bath at the warm

sulphur water artesian well at Causeway, which did so much to revive the weary ground crews who had toiled 16 hours a day during the month at Causeway, keeping the planes in fighting trim.

By the time the 79th Group arrived at Kairouan, its reputation for perfect bomber escort work had become so firmly established that several of the bomber wings specifically requested the Hawks for escort. On the other hand, the enemy gave indications of his desperate intent to supply his hard pressed army in Northeastern Tunisia with petrol by large, heavily escorted convoys of transport planes which were also evacuating key personnel on the return trip to Sicily. Accordingly, the 79th divided its time, from April 18 to the 26th, between bomber escort and fighter sweeps aimed at intercepting these convoys, a total of 600 odd sorties for the eventful period. On April 20, a good day was recorded when Capt. Borsodi and Lt. Bedford, of the 86th "Commanche" Squadron, flying as an element, put on their famous team act by shooting down a Ju 88 and an ME 109 each, Lt. Abbott, of the 85th "Flying Skulls", downed an additional ME 109 while Lt. Simpson, of the same Squadron damaged another, all without loss.

### OVER CAPE BON

The next day, April 21, 85th Squadron was on a fighter-bomber mission against enemy shipping off Cape Bon with 87th Squadron flying top cover, when jumped by 18 ME 109's. In the ensuing dogfight Lts. Berinati and Fitzgerald of the 87th "Skeeters" and Lt. Kelly of the 86th each shot down an ME 109, and Lt. Bolack, of the 85th, damaged another. Lt. John R. Anderson, of the 85th, was lost in this fight, having bailed out over the Gulf of Tunis, and has not been heard from since. On the 22nd, the 79th Group suffered its first non-combat fatality; Flight Officer Janicke, of the 87th, was killed when his plane plunged into a nearby lake during gunnery practice. On April 25, the 79th was relieved on patrol by the 57th Fighter Group, just 10 minutes before the latter encountered the huge convoy of approximately 100 Junkers 52's, escorted by 30 or 40 ME 109's, and shot down 75 of them for a new record for the war. It was a heart-breaking disappointment for the Hawks. Then on the following day, by a similar narrow margin, they missed the slaughter of the 31 huge ME 323's and 9 ME 109's, by the 7th South African Wing. However, their luck changed on April 29th when 86th Sqdn. was jumped by 15 plus MC 202's and ME 109's, and shot down 3 Macchi's and 2 ME 109's, besides 1 Macchi and 1 ME 109 probably destroyed. Major Watkins, Commanding Officer of the "Commanche", Lts. Hanson, Kaufman, Conly, and Capt. Turner all got 1 destroyed each, and Lts. Conly and Brewer each contributed 1 probable. It was a field day for the 86th as they suffered no losses.

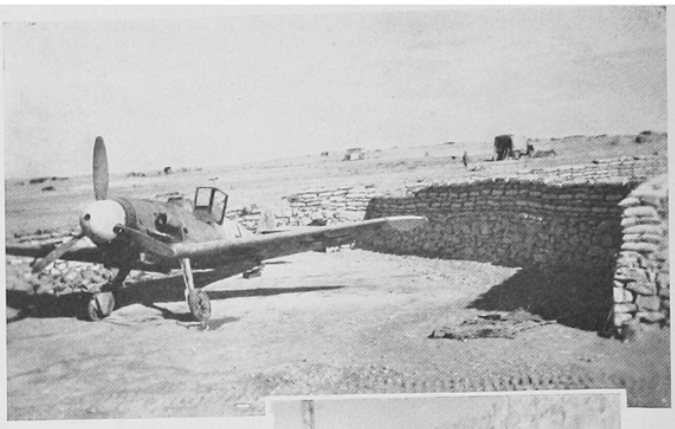
From April 29th on, until the end of the Tunisian Campaign (May 13) the Group concentrated on dive bombing missions against enemy ships attempting to evacuate their doomed army as the British did at Dunkirk. The 79th took a leading part in the strangling air blockade that was thrown around Cape Bon and assisted the British Navy to frustrate any such escape. In those last 14 days, the Hawks ran a string of 42 fighter-bomber missions totalling 1,372 sorties, proving their versatility as dive bombers as well as fighters, escorters and strafers.

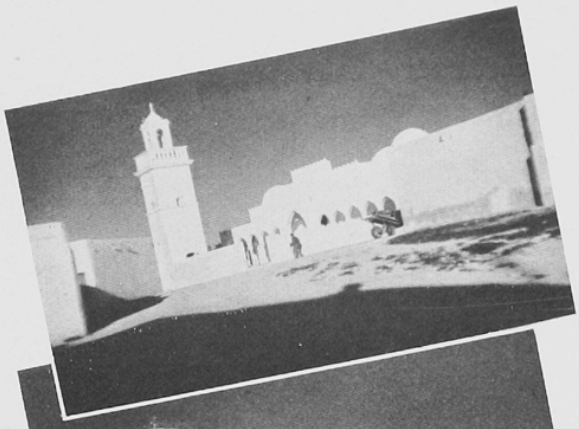
### DESTROYERS DESTROYED

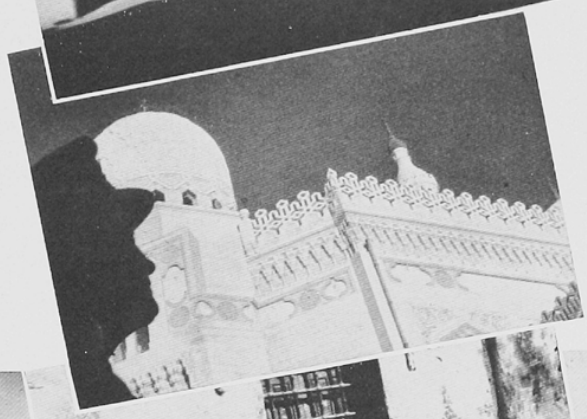
On 30 April, 85, 86, 87 and 316th Squadrons all went out and dive bombed a destroyer carrying troops out of Tunis Harbor, the 86th and 87th each getting direct hits with 500 lb. bombs, which seriously damaged the destroyer—credit for which was later shared with another Group. While reforming after their bombing runs, the 86th was jumped by 15 plus ME-109's, and in the dogfight that followed, Capt. Turner and Lt. Rhynard each shot down an "Me". Lt. Allard probably destroyed one and Lts. Rhynard, Hutt and Minnett each damaged another. In the dog fight, two Comanches collided while chasing the same ME 109 and the debris fell on a third below them, the triple collision causing the tragic loss of Lts. Perry E. Bailey, Thomas H. McCarty, and William D. Hansen of the 86th. 2 parachutes were seen to open and Lt. Bailey was later reported, from home, to have been picked up, uninjured, by an American freighter and taken to a place of safety. Nothing has been heard from McCarty and Hansen.

On the following mission, by all four squadrons the same day, another Italian Destroyer was sunk by the 87th and 316th Squadrons with 3 direct hits, and when the 85th Squadron covering them fought off an attack by 10 ME 109's, Capt. Say shot down an ME 109 and Lt. McNall, a MC 202, without loss to any of the squadrons. It was a beautiful example of the perfect inter-

"Monty" didn't keep us long at Fauconnerie, (right)







so on to Kairouan . . .
with its lovely mosques,
and "Small-Pox alley".










But flying was our business, Gafsa to Cape Bon

squadron team work, and, together with the previous mission, made our greatest day's damage to the enemy —1½ Destroyers sunk, 4 ME 109's shot down, 1 probably damaged, and 3 damaged.

On May 5th, Lt. Ryburn shot down another ME 109. Lt. Cahill was shot down by AA over Tunis on May 6 while on another fighterbomber mission, belly landed, and was seen to emerge from his plane, so it was hoped he became a P.O.W. On the following mission, the same day, 87 Squadron bombed a destroyer full of men, in the Gulf of Tunis, which blew up from direct hits and sank. Then on May 8, while still patroling the "strangle hold" route around Cape Bon, the 86th, 87th and 316th Squadrons bombing formation with 85th as top cover, was jumped by 30 plus ME 109's and FW 190's. In this dogfight Capt. Dempsey, of the 316th Sqdn., Capt. Say, Lt. Hoagland, and Lt. Hale of the 85th Sqdn., each shot down a Messerschmitt, besides which, Lt. Hale shot down a Fiesler Storch, all without loss to any of our pilots. This was the last challange by the Luftwaffe in the Tunisian Campaign for we had the air to ourselves while we swept his evacuation shipping from the sea, up to the end of hostilities on May 12. From the 13th through the 23rd the 79th then ran a series of 63 missions escorting friendly destroyers which were patrolling the waters around the Cape for stragglers, and also covering the first convoys coming through the Sicilian narrows, all without incident.

### SPOILS OF VICTORY

In the last few days of the campaign, a "gold rush" for captured enemy vehicles and equipment took place up in Cape Bon, and our pilots and enlisted men did rather well for themselves. Mercedes-Benz's, Fiats, Jeeps, and trucks and trailers of every description and condition poured into Hani L. G., at Kairouan, in a cavalcade reminiscent of the "Okies" trail to California. This badly needed additional transportation provided the opportunity, to visit and sightsee beautiful Tunis, wrecked Bizerte, ancient Carthage and many another picturesque spot in Northern Tunisia, in the weeks that followed. Miraculously, there were no casualties from booby traps. The vehicles were retained by the "scroungers" until turned in to the pool when the Group embarked from North Africa in July.

Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker made us a visit and delivered an inspiring talk on May 12. Following his talk, he made the rounds of the Squadrons, where he was entertained, and the pilots were given the privilege of personally talking to this great American. He rendered the highest praise to the engineering officers, crew chiefs and ground crews of all squadrons for their remarkable achievement of maintenance by which not a single landing, through engine failure, had taken place during the campaign. He wrote a letter of commendation to the Group, of which it is justly proud. An amusing incident happened in May, when over 1000 bundles of laundry from the Group, were scrambled together because of the truck overturning on its way back from Tripoli, and the laundry was returned in one large pile that resembled a laundryman's nightmare. It was a typical SNAFU and the resulting confusion was beyond description.

The 79th rested at Kairouan from May 24 until June 2 when the pilots, planes and the B party ground echelon proceeded to El Houaria L.G., in Cape Bon, to take part in the Pantelleria—Lampedusa operations, under the 12th Air Support Command. "A" party personnel remained at Kairouan, till June 6, then proceeded to Bou Grara to train and prepare equipment for the coming invasion of Sicily.

### PANTELLERIA

The Pantelleria campaign was short but furious. Beginning on June 4, a series of 59 umbrella and bomber escort missions were run over the island during which the Hawks had a field day at the expense of the luckless Italian and German fighters, who attempted to break their "umbrella". On June 7, the 85th was jumped by 8 enemy fighters and Lt's Clark and Bunker each shot down a Macchi 202. The following day, the same squadron was jumped by 10 plus ME 109's over Pantelleria, and this time Lt. Bolack and Lt. Martin each shot down a Macchi 202 and Capt. Cimaglia shot down a Macchi and an ME 109. Lt's Clark and Ryburn also shot down a Messerschmitt each, Lt. Hoagland got an ME 109 probable, and Lt. Abbott damaged another. Major Watkins, of 86th Sqdn., damaged an additional MC 202, making a Group total of 6 destroyed and 1 damaged and 1 probable for the day, without loss.

The 86th had been leading the other 2 squadrons all through the Tunisian campaign with a score of 13 enemy planes destroyed. The 85th, however, jumped into the lead on June 8, their day's bag running their score to 16 destroyed. On June 9, the 86th drew up close

when Major Watkins shot down another ME 109, while Capt. Morrisey and Lt's Bedford and Borsodi shared an FW 190 destroyed over Pantelleria, without loss, bringing their total up to 15. The 87th, which had had poor hunting, trailed with a score of 7. The came memorable June 10, when the 87th "Skeeters" electrified the Group and the entire Air Force by shooting down 15 enemy aircraft in 15 furious minutes over Pantelleria without a single loss to themselves, jumping into the lead of 22 destroyed.

It was the sort of dogfight fighter pilots dream of. After shooting down 3 Macchi 202's, stragglers from another dog fight in progress, the "Skeeters" shot down an entire squadron of 12 ME 109's escorting an enemy sea-rescue plane, refraining from attack on the latter. Lt. McArthur covered himself with distinction in shooting down 2 ME 109's, 2 Macchi 202's and damaging another ME 109, before bailing out of his damaged plane which had been crippled in the first onslaught. Lt. McArthur was later awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for the outstanding achievement. Lt. Anderson's performance was scarcely less distinguished. After shooting down 2 Macchi 202's and 1 ME 109 he returned and assisted Capt. Cossick and Lt. Jory to maintain the circling vigil that resulted in McArthur's rescue from the sea, after dark, by Walrus. There was plenty of glory for all that day. Capt. Ruff and Lt's Kirsch, Watkins, Miller, Adair and Berinati each shot down an ME. Lt. Col. Crogan, Group Operations Officer, contributed the weirdest victory of all by pressing so close, to make sure of his kill, that he sheered off the wing of an ME 109 which was violently evading. The Messerschmitt crashed into the sea, while the Colonel's rugged P-40 safely made port only damaged "Cat. I". Colonel Crogan, however, did not recommend these buzz saw tactics to other pilots. On the same day, the 85th added another to its bag when Lt. Connally shot down a Macchi 202. That was the last notable operation of the 79th in the North African Campaign. The Hawks continued their series of bomber escort missions without incident, until Pantelleria, after a terrific week's air blitz, surrendered on June 15th. That ended the North African Campaign for the Hawks, who had run a total of 668 sorties in the Pantelleria Operation which netted a bag of 26 destroyed, 1 probable and 4 damaged for the Group, without any losses. This brought the North African Campaign totals, to the following:

| Sqdn | Destroyed | Probable | Damaged |
|---|---|---|---|
| 85 | 17 | 1 | 6 |
| 86 | 15 | 1 | 8 |
| 87 | 22 | 3 | 8 |
| Group Total | 54 | 5 | 22 |

Pilots and B party ground personnel rejoined A party on June 14 at Bou Grara and the reunited Group moved, on the same day, back to Causeway L.G., where it had entered the Tunisian Campaign. This move was made to avoid the terrific dust storms at Bou Grara and to enjoy once more, the luxury of the daily bath at Causeway's artesian well. "A" party completed its invasion training and after 1 false start, moved to Tripoli, on June 25, for embarkation to Malta. "B" party and "C" party remained at Causeway until July 2 and August 13 respectively when they embarked for Sicily to rejoin A party, which had begun operations there in the meantime. This was the longest period of separation, between parties, ever experienced by the Group. Another sad accident occurred on July 16, when Lt. Lowndes of the 86th Sqdn., spun in and was killed during a practice flight at Causeway.

## EVALUATION

Our Group Commander, Colonel Earl E. Bates, who had been promoted to full Colonel during the campaign, was awarded the British D.F.C. on July 13, for the outstanding work of the Group under his leadership. D.F.C's were also awarded to the Squadron Commanders, Major Jacob F. Schoellkopf of the 85th, Major Tarlton N. Watkins of the 86th and Major Benjamin F. Ulrich of the 87th Squadrons, for the inspiring leadership given their pilots. Major Watkins was ordered home for a rest after serving overseas almost constantly since Pearl Harbor. He was succeeded as Commanding Officer of the 86th Squadron by Capt. Fred A. Borsodi.

The Engineering and Ordnance men, also, rendered outstanding service and the following are mentioned for outstanding contributions:

Staff Sergeants L.T. Good and George G. Drelshagen of the 86th Sqdn., who perfected an improved automatic carburetor air intake control which appreciably prolonged the life of the engine.

Lt. Searcy Birdsong Jr., of the 86th Sqdn., who perfected a new method of steadying 250 lb. bombs in racks and thus solved the problem that had been vexing both the USAAF and RAF.

The Operations and Intelligence Sections, of Squadrons and Group, were on the job day and night accepting and planning missions, and flashing, quickly and accurately, the results thereof back to higher Headquarters. Not a single blunder occurred as a result of bad briefing. The Squadron Intelligence Officers derive great pride from the fact that **not once** during operations, did our pilots attack friendly aircraft, Naval Vessels or ground troops, a blunder that occurs all too frequently in War. The communications men did superb work in quickly establishing communications at each new location and maintaining them despite great difficulty. A group without communications is paralyzed. The Medical Section, by religious application of preventive medicine, maintained a remarkable standard of health. Not one case of typhoid, typhus or cholera developed even in one of the most disease ridden sections of the world, and our venereal rate was almost nil. Material and transportation sections managed, somehow, to keep us supplied with food, petrol, water, bombs, ammunition and airplane parts. If the Americans didn't have it they went to the British. If neither had it they"stole" it and kept the planes in the air. The personnel section worked hard and effectively keeping our vital records and statistics and the parachute department didn't let any of the boys down — too fast. The kitchen crews fed us somehow — at camp or on the move, and kept up morale with their conscientious efforts.

The 79th summarizes its N. African Campaign as follows: Greatest contributions to success of campaign:

1. Assisting in flanking Mareth Line at El Hamma.
2. Assisting in flanking Wadi Akarit.
3. Assisting in conquest of Pantelleria.
4. Escorting 2125 medium bombers over enemy territory without loss to enemy fighters.

Operations:

12 Strafing Missions
48 Fighter Bomber Missions
80 Ship Escort Missions
150 Bomber Escort Missions
27 Fighter Sweeps—Umbrellas—Armed Recces.

Total 317 Missions totalling 4737 sorties.

Casualties:

27 Aircraft Lost
2 Pilots wounded, not returned to duty
2 Pilots Killed in Accidents
19 Pilots Killed or Missing in Action (incl. 1 attached from 324 Gp)
(12 by ground fire, while strafing — 1 by AA, 6 by enemy fighters).

Percentage of losses to sorties:
Strafing Missions — 7.27%
All other — 0.15%

Victory Ratio over enemy a/c in combat: 9 to 1.

Claimed damage inflicted on enemy:

54 enemy aircraft destroyed; 5 probable; 22 damaged
2½ destroyers sunk
5 merchant vessels directly hit and probably sunk
3 tanks damaged.
50 Trucks and armored cars destroyed and flamers
79 Trucks and armored cars damaged
3 88 mm. guns destroyed
4 guns silenced by strafing
500 plus personnel killed (estimated)
Numerous buildings, blockhouses, radio stations damaged.

## MALTA

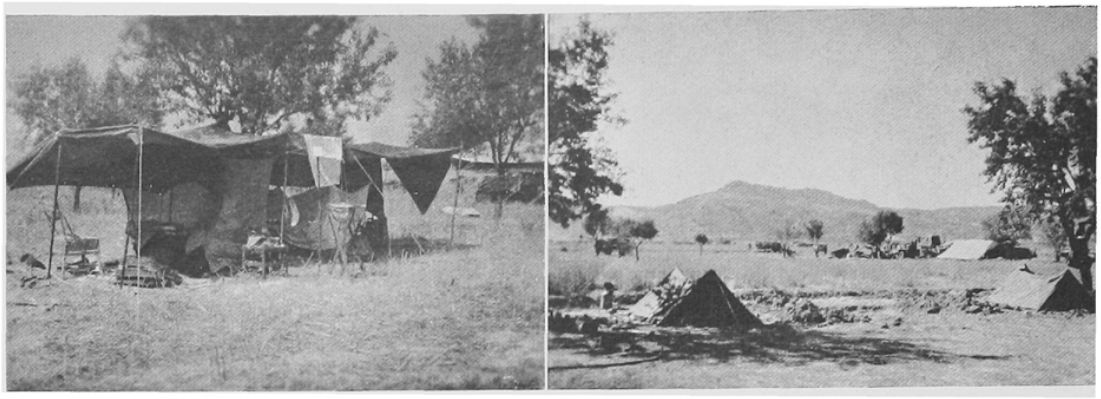
Late the morning of June 26, "A" Party sailed from Tripoli for Malta aboard a Landing Ship-Tank. After twenty four hours of K-Rations and rough seas it was no disappointment to dock in Grand Harbor.

Our camp, on the southwestern part of the Island, overlooked the sea toward Gozo Island. Tents, dispersed among the rocks, were supported by steel pegs cemented into the solid substance. The advance party was occupied with the waterproofing of vehicles, cypher schools and the general camp routine but there was plenty of time for sightseeing and swimming. The crystal clear blue waters of the Mediterranean never will be forgotten; the swimming was perfect.

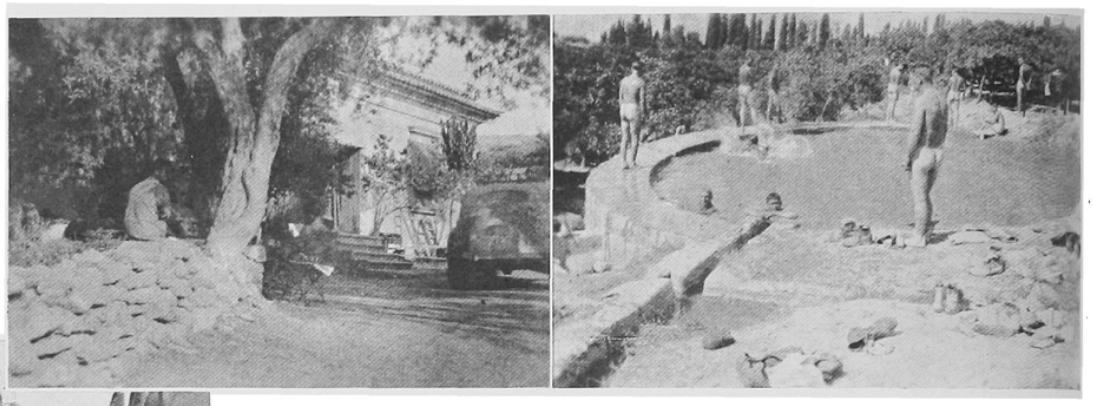
On July 6, the 79th flew an uneventful orientation mission from Causeway L.G., Tunisia, over southern Sicily in preparation for the coming invasion. Malta was used as the refuelling point and the pilots landed at the famous Luca Airdrome, long the nerve center of Malta's defense.

Malta will be remembered for its ancient cities surrounded by high walls and moats, the beautiful churches and the romantic history of the knights. But always foremost in our memories will be the magnificent story of the great courage, sacrifice and determination which saved this vital island when its fall seemed certain. Its defenders withstood over 2000 raids and fought with their backs to the wall while gradually landing grounds were carved out of the rocks and an air force built up to drive the enemy from the skies. The invasion of Sicily, soon to come, would have been a vastly difficult task, but for heroic Malta.

# Sicily

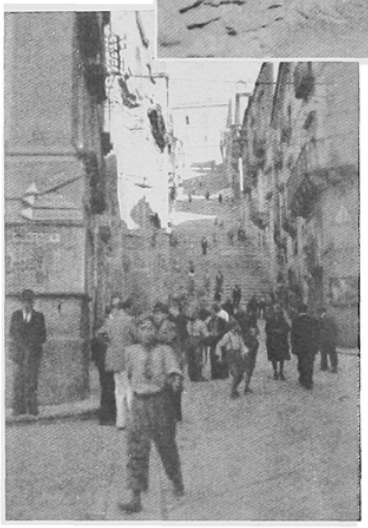


*On Sicily we slept in olive groves,*



*had Villa Clubs,*

*Swam in Irrigation Tanks,*



*and generally "Went-to-town"*

*Below: At Palagonia, Pilots McArthur and Berinati buttered-up the British ack-ack*

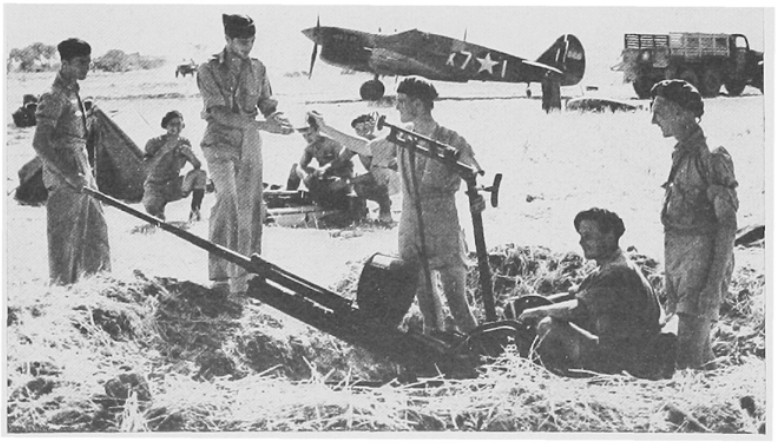
"A" Party embarked from Malta the night of July 16th, six days after the invasion of Sicily, aboard an L.S.T. and an L.C.T. An uneventful trip on a calm sea under a full moon brought us to Siracusa at noon July 17th. A camp was established in an olive grove near the sea, four miles south of Augusta.

While waiting for our landing ground everyone enjoyed more swimming in the blue Mediterranean and the abundance of melons, fruit, tomatoes and wine, a pleasant change from desert life. A nightly raid on Augusta Harbor, by Jerry, was a little close for complete enjoyment of the fireworks.

July 26th, we moved to Cassibile L.G., 6 miles south of Siracusa, and the pilots arrived with their P-40's. The next afternoon we had our first mission of the Sicilian campaign, an antishipping patrol with 500 lb. GP bombs.

"B" Party showed up July 28th, after being separated from "A" Party nearly 5 weeks. That morning, two ME 109's strafed the L.G. No personnel were injured and only one aircraft damaged, slightly. However, it started an epidemic of slit trench digging.

July 31st, the Group moved to Palagonia L.G picturesquely located in the hills southwest of Catania






*On Sicily, in July '43, some of the original Pilots relaxed long enough for this shot with Colonel Bates*

Palagonia will always be remembered as the dust bowl of Sicily. Take-off's, landings, and taxiing were impeded by the ever present clouds of dust.

### MESSINA STREITS

Many more dive bombing missions followed with shipping along the east coast, the north coast and in Messina Straits, the principal targets. Secondary targets were dock installations, stores dumps, bridges, etc. of which many were destroyed or damaged. From time to time, as mechanical transport targets developed, strafing missions were laid up on, causing wide spread damage to enemy supply lines.

Much to every pilots disappointment, the great Luftwaffe found courage to come out and attack our formations only twice during the whole campaign, both costly to Jerry. August 12th, ten plus ME 109's and FW 190's dived on the 87th Squadron as they were reforming after sinking an F-boat north of the toe of Italy. During the ensuing dog fight, Lt. Paul G. McArthur shot down one ME 109 which made him the first ace of the 79th Group. Capt. William B. Rogers destroyed one ME 109 and damaged another. Lt. Leo G. Berinati shot down one FW 190. Lt. Morris H. Watkins was directly responsible for the fourth victory, an ME 109, but he had some assistance from Jerry. Lt. Watkins had the ME 109 in his sights at close range but just before he squeezed the trigger, three ME 109's on his tail fired, wounding him in the shoulder and knocking out the fire control mechanism. The same stream of Hun cannon fire went on into Lt. Watkin's target sending it down in flames. The Germans had finished the job for him.

Lt. Francis W. Hennin's plane was hit and he bailed out over the sea where he was rescued by an American Gunboat. All the other aircraft including Lt. Watkins' returned safely to the L.G.

The record of damage to shipping was excellent and is a real tribute to the courage and skill of our pilots who went in at low altitude to dive-bomb in the face of the greatest AA concentration in the world. In Messina Straits it was reported 10/10 over one target.

The Hawks displayed throughout the campaign their

splendid offensive spirit. On two occasions, squadrons asked, and received, permission to go back on targets which were not "clobbered" to their complete satisfaction on the previous mission.

Five pilots were missing in this campaign: Lt. Frank E. Newton, 86 Sq., July 31st; Lt. F. E. Yocum, 85 Sq., Aug. 3rd; Lt. Daniel E. Mayer, 86 Sq., Aug. 3rd; Capt. Frank M. Ruff, 87 Sq., Aug. 3rd; Lt. James C. Pittard, 87 Sq., Aug. 3rd.

Toward the end, as targets diminished, the pilots had time to seek a few of the comforts available in Sicily. The 85th Squadron showed the way by making arrangements with a local doctor to use his unoccupied home for a club. Quickly the house was screened, fitted with electric lights and a comfortable side room equipped with an ME 109 wing and brass rail — a regular "Union Club". Further up the hill, toward Mineo, overlooking the L. G., appeared the "Skeeter" Club sign hung in a stone gateway marking the entrance to a Baron's Villa. Here the 87th Squadron and their guests enjoyed some of the amenities including the novelty of plumbing.

August 16th, the American 7th Army entered Messina at 2000 hours and the Sicilian Campaign officially ended August 18th.

The following statistics show the **observed damage** inflicted upon the enemy by the Hawks. They cannot fully measure the weight of losses suffered by the enemy in personnel, morale, lines of communication and supply, nor the effective close support given our own ground troops.

**Statistical Record**

| Sicilian Campaign | Destroyed | Propable | Damaged |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 2 FW 190<br>3 ME 109 | 4 ME 109 | 2 ME 109 |
| Total to date | 59 | 11 | 24 |

**Missions & Sorties**

| Sicilian Campaign | Missions | Sorties |
|---|---|---|
| (July 27 to Aug. 18 incl.) | 201 | 1791 |
| Previous total | 318 | 4746 |
| Grand total | 519 | 6537 |

**Sorties By Type With Losses**

| | No. of Sorties | Pilots Lost | a/c Lost |
|---|---|---|---|
| Anti-Shipping Patrol | 1478 | 1 by AA | 3 (2 by AA) |
| Strafing | 256 | 4 by grd fire | 4 |
| Sea-Rescue-Escort | 45 | 0 | 0 |
| Armed Recce | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| | 1791 | 5 | 7 |

Ratio of strafing losses to strafing sorties equals 1.56%.

**Observed Ground and Sea Damage**

| | Destroyed | Damaged |
|---|---|---|
| Siebel Ferries, F-Boats, Barges | 50 | 165 |
| Merchant Vessels | 2 | 20 |
| Dock Installations | 36 | 6 |
| M/T | 33 | 92 |
| R/R tracks & Marshalling Yards | 5 | 12 |
| Freight Cars | 5 | 70 |
| Blds. & Storage Dumps | 18 | 10 |
| Radio & Power Stations | 1 | 3 |
| Bridges | 5 | 5 |
| Camp areas | — | 5 |
| A/A Positions | 9 | 8 |
| M/G Posts | 18 | 4 |
| Personnel | 200 | — |



Messina was rubble, but the Straits were peaceful for a change





we landed at Calabria without incident

# Italy

Italy's invasion by allied forces began Sept. 3, four years after Great Britain's entry into the War. Beach heads established near Reggioni Calabria, the Allies encountered heavy fighting for several days while consolidating their positions. Air cover was gived by aircraft based in Sicily. Not until Sept. 13 did part of the 79th leave Sicily for Crotone, Italy, where they arrived two days later after crossing the Straits from Messina to Reggio. The Straits lying beneath the protection of the Calabrian mountains, not long before held some of the strongest, most rapid firing German flak positions. For every mission the Straits offered a blanket of lead. When 79th crossed there was only the steady traffic of LCT's shuttling troops and supplies.

On Sept. 17, from Isole L. G., at Crotone, Italy, the 79th Group began operations in Italy. This Group was one of the first American Air Force fighter groups to operate from an Italian L. G. In four days 79 flew 23 missions, 282 sorties. We were doing mostly strafing or armed recce. Even on bombing missions the aircraft strafed in the dive. This proved to be normal procedure, not exceptional.

**LEAP-FROGGING FOR "MONTY"**

From Crotone, we went north following the 8th Army's advance on the east coast, to a landing ground at Firmo. For three days, Sept. 22—24 inclusive, the Group flew nine missions, one hundred five sorties. Firmo possessed a fairly presentable house on the edge of the airdrome. For the first time in nearly a year the officers of Hq. enjoyed the comforts of a house with the added luxuries of running water and electric lights.

From Isola L. G. the "B" or rear party of the 79th went on to Pisticci L. G., by-passing the forward unit at Firmo. Pisticci illustrated well the efforts and skill of the Royal Engineers—who leveled the German's ploughed furrows and restored the serviceability of what the enemy figured a destroyed terrain. This in forty-eight hours. Because of the fast moving advance up the coast of Italy we flew only on Sept. 25, 26 and 29 from this position, 6 missions, 52 sorties.

On Oct. 1, the Warhawks went to work from a strip, still further north, bearing the name of Penny Post. A blue star on the placard announced it was a

U. S. field and indications of bits of shrapnel and destroyed Jerry planes made it clear it had once been one of the satellite fields of Foggia, the hub of enemy operations in Italy. Nearly three hundred P-38's had swooped down on this area some three weeks before. From that day the Jerry began counting his losses of aircraft destroyed on the ground, in solid round figures.

Penny Post was left heavily mined and some of the British detecting personnel lost their lives removing detonators on the day our own operations began, Oct. 1, 1943. Our program accelerated to a solid sheet of strafing. On Oct. 6, despite adverse weather, 79 helped the ground forces to eliminate a stubborn German position which had been counterattacking for twenty four hours, threatening to cut off a number of British tanks and troops. For this achievement, General Montgomery telephoned his thanks. On this particular mission, 79th, with two squadrons, the 86th and 87th, claimed 28 motor transport flamers, 26 damaged and 30 plus personnel killed. One of our pilots, Lt. Steele of 86th, was killed in this action.

No less important was the work performed on a Landing Ground at Pescara when our squadrons destroyed 18 aircraft and damaged 33 more, with no losses.

Because air support includes the destruction of enemy supply lines and enemy transport, our aircraft patrolled vigilantly looking for such targets. Outstanding was Oct. 5, when the Group scored as follows: 27 transport flamers, 5 left smoking, 2 destroyed, 1 trailer destroyed, 12 damaged, 2 German jeeps and personnel strafed, 1 locomotive exploded, 2 direct hits on personnel and 250 foot road bridge and a camp area strafed. One can better visualize the combined efforts of RAF and ourselves if he looks further upon the days's results. On Oct. 5, 1943, in a single area near the eastern coast of Italy, about opposite Naples, the Germans lost 78 vehicles destroyed, 77 damaged, 1 locomotive destroyed, 2 trailers destroyed and a tank damaged. This by a British Wing and ourselves with no allied losses.

FOGGIA

Four days later the Group moved into Foggia No. 3, a beautiful grass landing ground near the San Severo road shadowed by the hills of Manfredonia in the North and the Southern Appenines to the South.

Difficult weather over the rugged backbone of Italy made visibility difficult at dawn and last light, the hours when the German slinks out from hiding and takes to the roads. Terrified of allied strafing, Jerry drives by night and covers his head by day. Despite haze, overcast and poor visibility, the 79th Fighter Group continued operations on the 10th, bombing enemy flak positions, transport, and troop concentrations. By these missions the Canadian division was given a wider arc of flexibility.

Locomotives, rolling stock, and trackage offered good targets for strafing. Escaping steam from a damaged engine is as good a landmark on a clear day as the red smoke burned by our front line troops. We attacked locomotives and trains Oct. 13 and 18.

On the 25th of October, MORU called asking us to blast a bridge over the Sangro. (In Africa, we attacked a similar bridge on the coast road near Hammamet incessantly, but the bridge was insultingly intact when our convoy passed over it some ten days afterwards). With two 250 or with one 500 pounder a bridge is a slender target, and 500 lbs. of explosive sometimes is not enough to destroy the thick concrete base even with a direct hit. Forty-seven sorties went after the target. Squadron claims were conservative but later reports confirmed that no traffic could pass over that bridge after the 25th.

Strikes against docks and small shipping occupied us once more on 29-30 October.

Capt. Neilson, now C.O. of the 86 Sq., and Lt. M.K. Davis of 87th, gave us a "kick" by walking back from German territory. Both spoke of the kindness shown them by the Italian peasants, who hid them from German patrols.

As the 8th Army moved along the Adriatic and the 5th advanced on the Naples side, our aircraft attacked opportunity targets in the Isernia-Capinone area. Later we shifted towards a network of roads North-west of the Sangro.

When fighter-bomber or strafing missions give close support, briefing for the mission **must** be brief. At best a fighter unit cannot devote the same thoroughness in describing targets as bombers. Moreover, the target of opportunity is often hypothetical. Intelligence figures a movement ought to occur at a certain position, sometimes a road block made intentionally by ourselves, and we send the fighters out to feed

on what presents itself. A solitary staff car, a dispatch rider, or German jeep ("the people's car") filled with personnel can be important as a bridge or column of M/T.

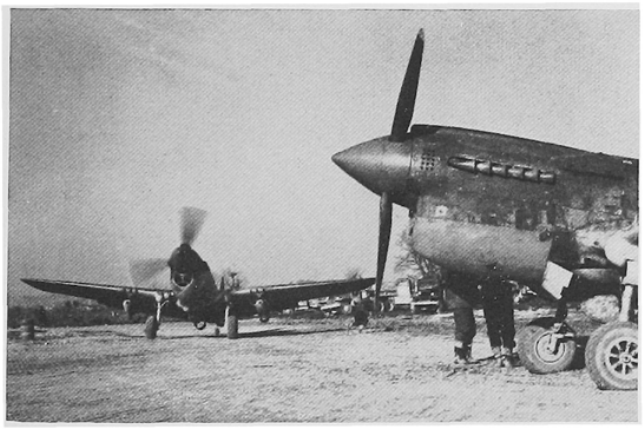
On the 7th of November, weather permitted 85 Sq to invade the roads Northwest of the Sangro. In about 18 minutes of combat they destroyed a barn, a staff car, machine gun post, 3 trucks and damaged 14 more trucks, 2 trailers, 4 machine gun posts, a house and a German jeep—a neat pattern of work for an autumn afternoon.

On November 16, a few of us flew to Bari with Major Benson, General Montgomery's pilot, in the General's C-47. Some weeks before, the General had invited nearly a dozen officers from Group and 85, 86, 87 Squadrons to accompany him to Cairo. At the airdrome, the General made a really typical statement: "Gentlemen, you are free for forty-eight hours, unless of course, the 8th is in full retreat before then".

Lt. Col. Grogan and Major Uhrich left the Group to return to the United States. There wasn't even time enough to throw a decent party, even though a source for cognac had been found.

MUDDY MADNA

Another move on November 19, this time to a landing ground on a coastal strip called Madna,



south of Termoli. The trip was uneventful and short. We viewed our new home with misgiving and suspicion. Porous lowland can hardly absorb rain and the meteorologists as well as we know that it does rain in Italy.

The rains came and "A" party huddled together in tents waiting and wondering. Steel mats had been laid down but dispersal areas in mud are not serviceable. We had to wait until the British Engineers, helped by the Basutos (East Africans) labor corps laid additional mats off the runway. And it continued to rain. Trucks bogged down, tentage was soaked and a great swamp of mud surrounded the mess tent. Everyone who could find galoshes or overshoes wore them. Trousers, shirts, raincoats were crusted with mud. Jeeps gained a new camouflage: blobs, hunks, pieces of mud.

One afternoon, the 21st, a peculiar noise was heard coming from the mist hanging over the coastline—cannon fire. We watched a lone JU 88, perfectly silhouetted against the sky. The profile was unmistakable; likewise, the bits of smoke coming from the cannon. Nothing was hit although the JU did a steep bank into the airdrome and as quickly banked away. None of the ack-ack opened fire—they were too busy freeing themselves of mud—but the flak at Termoli knocked him down—so the reports acknowledge.

"B" party and the aircraft arrived the next day. Everyone helped park the ships and everyone wondered how we were to operate. A couple days of dry weather, however, and we were on operations again. The four Squadrons attacked MT and flew close support targets on the Canadian, New Zealand and "Yellow Axe" (78th Division) fronts. There were several successful missions. On one afternoon, 87th Fighter Squadron, flying towards a close support objective across the Sangro, caught some FW 190's below them. Two were destroyed and one damaged. Captain Lee, the new 87th C. O., accounted for one destroyed and 1 damaged, while Lt. Wainwright claimed his first destroyed enemy aircraft.

November 25 was Thanksgiving Day. Christmas packages and gifts had already begun to arrive. Quite different was this years's story from last. Our Christmas parcels straggled in then as late as March, April, May.

On November 30, the 79th Fighter Group flew twenty-six missions, a new record. In two days, November 30 & 31st, the Group dropped over 65 tons of bombs on heavily defended areas around Orsogna. This enabled the 8th to establish definite bridgeheads across the Sangro. Congratulatory messages came in by wire and by telephone.

The boys on the line really did a job. We were flying missions every hour on the hour. 99th Squadron flew nine missions in one day and the 87th Squadron

flew eight. That meant loading bombs, cleaning guns, refueling and repairing. Damaged aircraft were repaired, props were changed and instruments adjusted practically on the spot. Not only the crew chief sat on the wing while the plane taxied to the runway. Other men,—armorers, fitters, mechanics also did their work right up to the last minute. It was an all-out effort by everybody.

One sunny afternoon, a day or so after Thanksgiving, in a cloudless sky, there suddenly appeared a vapor trail south of the airdrome, in the vicinity of Bari. Puffs of flak reached into the blue, four upon four, almost reaching the proper level. Then the trail pointed upward and the flak bursts broke far below. 35,000 or 40,000 feet, you could but guess, in a wide sweep like fading, drifting sky-writing, the aircraft headed north. Over our L. G., Madna, there appeared a black spot before the vapor stream. Through the binoculars, one could recognize a black swastika painted on a silver fuselage. The pilot appeared to lose altitude. West of the airdrome, all at once, we saw two distinct vapor trails converging against the Hun. Later we learned these were two intercepting Spitfires chasing the high altitude Junker. Then the story lost itself in the haze, but the Spits shot him down.

*"A chain of mountains over ten thousand feet high lies west of Madna. Heavy, rugged, impenetrable they look down upon us, an American Fighter Group, working at war. In the valleys between the ranges, lie German 88 mm guns. Yet from here, the scene looks peaceful and inviting."*

Averaging 36 to 48 sorties a day, the 79th continued to work close support targets on the lateral roads branching out of Chieti. After dropping bombs, the aircraft, usually in squadron flights of six, separated and strafed individually. Intense small arms fire supplemented the danger of heavy and light anti-aircraft fire. On the second day of December, Lt. DeFoor's aircraft struck high tension wires, cutting the entire electrical system north of Pescara. By good fortune, he escaped injury although the aircraft returned with a damaged vertical stabilizer, prop, and wing. In the desert, the carrying away of communications wire was a good show because the supporting poles were made of light wood. These European high tension cables erected on steel frames were another story. On the same day Lt. Kellerman, 85 Sq., struck by flak, failed to return.

**CLOSE SUPPORT FOR "MONTY"**

A series of close support targets arrived through the Air Support Control of the 8th Army. These extended from Ortona to Orsogna and as far west as Chieti. In six figure pinpoints, they became important targets because they meant defended positions, mortars, big guns or troop concentrations. They stood in the way of General Montgomery's advance up the east coast. Many of our pilots suffered ack-ack hits before their dive bombing attacks but chose to complete their missions. On December 8th, Lt. Kehr of the 86th Sq., was struck by flak and failed to return. Our losses in Italy were beginning to increase to proportions greater than anything suffered since the El Hamma strafing. You can't evaluate success by vehicles damaged Huns killed, strong points bombed, in proportion to an American pilot's life—not if you know him personally.

Numerous commendations on our bombing came in from time to time, both from the British and Dominion Commanders of the 8th Army in front of us. Our aircraft were causing countless German casualties, destroying vast amounts of Jerry equipment and blowing up buildings. Through the combined efforts of the fighter bombers and medium bombers, the line on the east coast of Italy was moving up, cutting into Panzer lines and forcing the Hun to make hasty withdrawls. The German lost, by capture, hundreds of personnel and tons of heavy equipment. After the dive bombers attacked, Canadian tanks often went into a area and enjoyed a field day against disorganized resistance.

Losses of our own personnel were Lt. Burke F. Allen of 87th Sqn. and Lt. Howard A. Smith of 85th Sqn. on the 12th.

The directive for Dec 18th, 1943, from the DAF, called for a strong effort in support of the New Zealand and Indian Divisions thrusting towards Orsogna and Tollo. Thirty missions were flown by Warhawks of 57th and 79th Groups, the RAF 239 Wing and the SAAF Spit-bombers of No. 4 Squadron against enemy gun positions and installations in these areas. In spite of indifferent weather, these attacks were pressed home wherever it was possible to identify targets. Until noon, fourteen missions had bombed well on their targets. Only three missions had failed to locate them. Afternoon, the cloud became 10/10ths solid at 4,000 feet and even lower. Nine missions brought

their bombs back while four bombed alternative targets, discovered through some gap in the clouds. In some instances, the overcast extended down to 1,000 feet above sea level and in some places near Orsogna, the "deck" itself is 1,000 feet above sea level. Thus you can realize that the overcast extended almost to the ground, which accentuates the courage, bravery and determination of every fighterbomber pilot who on the 18th day of December, carried out his attack through such low cloud-layers upon positions known to be well defended by flak. This determination to fulfill a mission caused serious losses for the day. 87th Sqn. lost two pilots, Lts. Simmons and Specht, 85th Sqn. lost one, Lt. Marshall and the British lost two others.

Lt. Specht led his flight through the overcast and was not seen to pull out from his dive. On the same mission, after pulling out at tree top level, Lt. Simmons went on to strafe some MT and, although hit on his first pass, was beginning another when his aircraft "went in", in the Orsogna-Arielli area. This was conspicious gallantry and outstanding bravery.

Lt. Marshall, also struck by flak, bailed out into the sea north of Vasto. Seeing him in difficulties with his dinghy, Lt. Mathesius, of the same squadron, with great resourcefullness and disregard for his own safety, inflated his own dinghy, dived low and dropped it to him. But Lt. Marshall did not return.

Another story of heroism occurred on the same day. Lt. Trotter, a South African pilot, had bailed out somewhere north of the Sangro River mouth. He had been on a bombline patrol. Two Italians near the river, seeing a pilot in a dinghy ,despite heavy seas, bravely put out in a leaky boat and rescued Lt. Trotter. Lt. Trotter unfortunately died of wounds and exposure in a nearby Allied Hospital.

The air-sea rescue amphibian had taken off, escorted by two Spitfires, for enemy waters. At the mouth of the Sangro, in territory still under enemy control, this unarmed aircraft flown by RAF, set down. The sea had become too rough for another take-off, so it remained beached until the next day. The Spits covered it until last light.

*"Tomorrow night is Christmas Eve. For many of us, this is our second Christmas overseas. The first was spent in the Western Desert of Egypt, some forty miles west of Alexandria. There is not a man who doesn't hope and pray that by next December some kind Santa Claus will see to it that he is back home. This misty and foggy Thursday with more than a hint of dampness in the air is far cry from the Christmas season of reindeer and sleigh bells."*

The eve before the New Year found us still at Madna. From 1943 to 1944 there were five campaigns to remember; Egypt-Libya, Tunisia, Pantelleria, Sicily and Italy. 1943-1944, twelve months, over twelve hundred operational miles. 1944-1945—how many more operational miles and where?

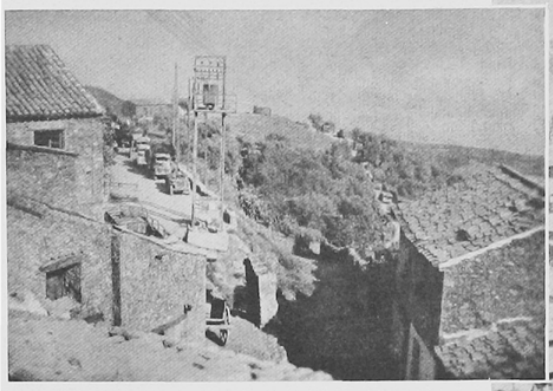
First three days of the new year, weather grounded us. A bitter wind from the Adriatic swept our camp; tore into the mess tents and operational centers. Snow flurries and hail, rain and sleet belied once more the sunny Italy of travel posters.

Perfect flying weather on the 8th and 9th. It was particularly annoying that targets were slow in coming and the Army did not ask for any assistance. Snow in the mountain passes not only bogs down Jerry but our own forces. This was our first static station, except for rest periods after campaigns. We'd always had the good fortune of pushing on over new territory, exploiting the gains of a particularly mobile ground force. This winter campaign in Italy was something different; longer intervals between missions, days with no operations at all and periods of leisure which play peculiar pranks on morale.

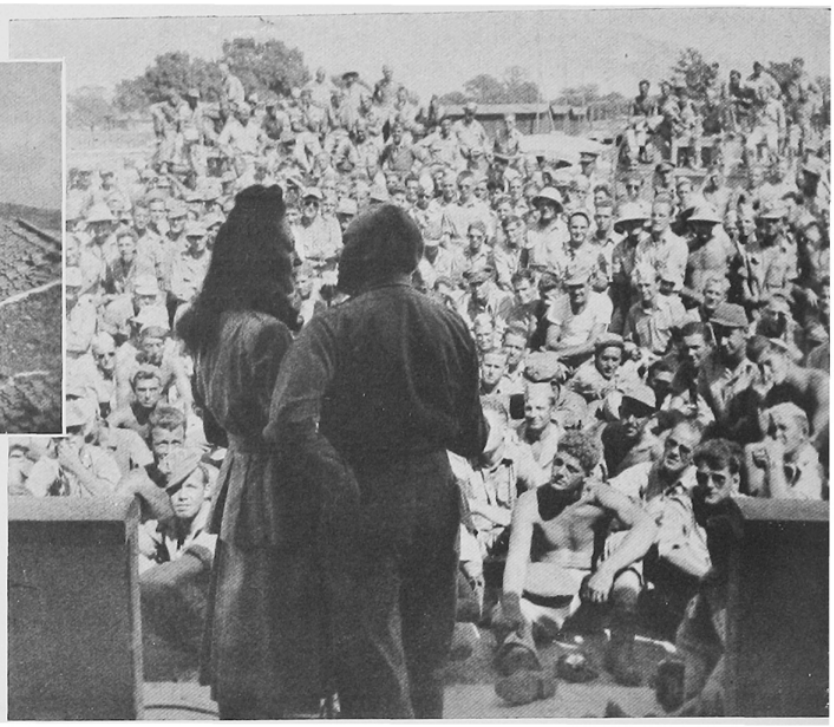
Fighter pilots like nothing better than to swoop down on a solitary locomotive, with steam up, rolling down a length of track. The explosion is good for morale. Imagine the consternation of one of our Allied pilots, when just as he drew a bead on a luscious fat locomotive near Avezzano in the mountains, its engineer drove it into violent reverse. The pilot overshot the mark, but returned to destroy it anyhow.

It was known that the enemy, in mountain roads locked with snow, used mules in considerable numbers to pull out motor transport stuck in snow banks. On January 9, 79th sent squadrons after the MT and the mules in the Avezzano area. Not only were these targets successfully dealt with but personnel in fox holes by the road were also bombed. Tracks in the snow gave perfect direction.

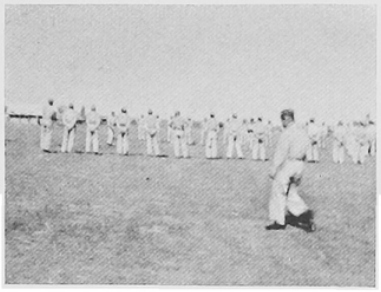
Tanks are as vulnerable to snow as MT. The last target on the 9th was a fighter bomber show by twelve aircraft of 85 and 87 squadrons on snow bound tanks near Pescocostanzo. One of our pilots, Lt. Var-



Our convoys were slowed by towns like this in Southern Italy.



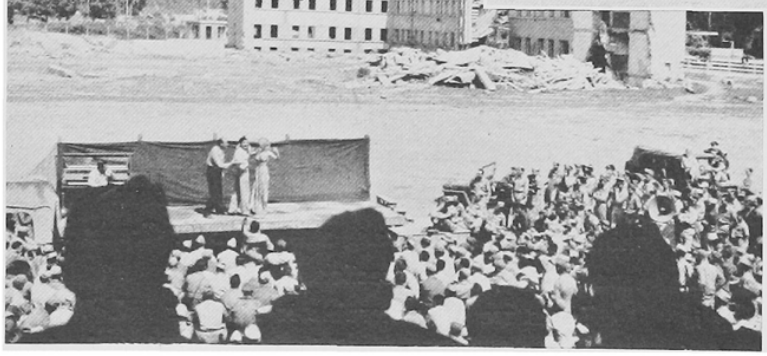
Jack Benny got to Italy practically ahead of us.



Gen. Doolittle came to see us at Foggia No. 3







Marlene Dietrich and Larry Adler went over big at "Pomig"

ner, 85 Squadron, was missing after this operation. The missions for the tenth were accepted and given out the evening of the ninth. 86 Squadron was to take-off at dawn, five minutes after seven. 87 followed ten minutes later. Each flight leader himself judged the weather favorable or unfavorable. Both squadrons elected to fly and they repeated the targets of the 9th, tanks and MT on the mountain roads. Lt. Wiener of the 87th Squadron failed to return. It is the custom for squadrons to send out "recces" for missing pilots. Captain Lee, Commanding Officer of 87 and Lt. Vandivert went out immediately even though Captain Lee had been on the same mission. They found no sign of Lt. Wiener.

*"Once again, the clouds rolled in, unfolding from the mountain ranges west of us. In the evening, the moon lay veiled, only a suggestive glow behind the curtain. Overhead, an aircraft roamed forward towards the enemy lines. A thin film of ice coated the puddles."*

## Naples

At seven in the morning on January 15, 1944, "A" party went from Madna to Capodichino Airdrome, Naples. The convoy, passing over the mountains west of Foggia, required two days.

When the Group arrived, it found a complete soundphoto outfit waiting for it. We were to go into the news. Cameras turned while weary soldiers unloaded trucks, set up necessary operating equipment.

Life on a busy urban airdrome was no less puzzling than quarters in a house. Red Cross Clubs, large well-supplied post-exchanges, and well dressed war-workers, by coincidence female, off-set some of the dust pounded from the antique cobblestones of neapolitan roads. But Naples was dirty. The ragged, war-torn atmosphere of filth, hunger and depression belied the songs organgrinders used to play, picturing a sunny Italy bubbling over with joy and laughter.

79 Group operated from Capodichino on the 18th, sending out 48 sorties to escort surface vessels shelling enemy strongholds from the Gulf of Gaeta, north of Naples. On the 19th and 20th, thirty-six sorties were flown by 85th, 86th and 87th Squadrons from Madna. This operation, while aircraft worked from Capodichino on the 20th, using different squadron call signs, served as a decoy to the German interceptor control stations, picking up our flights. We wanted the Hun to believe we were still operating from Madna. Although the Madna operations were by necessity limited, having transferred all but fifteen aircraft to Naples, the Group gave Populi a thorough going over. The railroad station received several direct hits with five hundred pound bombs and on the afternoon of the 20th, several concealed oil tanks north of town were set on fire.

The 79 Group, upon going to Naples, became part of the task force assembled for "Rome Invasion". While landing craft carried three times the number of troops used at Salerno to the primary point at Anzio, southeast of Rome, destroyers shelled Cittavecchia, north of Rome, as a diversionary thrust.

### ANZIO "UMBRELLA"

At three in the morning of the 22nd, the 3rd U. S. Division, 1st British Infantry, 2nd British Sea Borne Storm Brigade and a U. S. Ranger Division struck at Anzio. Their landing was at first unopposed. None of the troops employed in this operation, known as "Shingle", were drawn from either the 8th or 5th Army fronts. For purposes of further deception, special units came out of the 8th Army line on the Adriatic to work into the 5th. And the famous 4th Indian Division, known throughout the African Campaign, went into Ortona beside the Canadians. New Zealanders assembled with the Fighting French in the center of the 5th Army line.

The air power committed for the Anzio landings was formidable. Our 64th Fighter Wing, compromising fighters alone, without taking into account any medium bombers, was prepared to fly 600 or 700 sorties per day against the enemy. They were going to destroy him on the ground and in the air, pulverize his aidromes and smash his lines of communications in Rome itself.

The role of 79 in this action was to escort all shipping, preventing the Hun dive-bombers from pressing home attacks, and fly fighter cover over the assault beaches as a strafing protection.

On a beach patrol, on the morning of January 22nd, 87th Squadron first claimed enemy aircraft destroyed near the Anzio landing area. In a dog fight with twenty Messerschmitts and Focke-Wolfes, the pi-

lots flew all over the sky. Lt. Owen, Sqn. Operations Officer, chased several FW's into Rome itself, attracting anti-aicraft fire from that venerable crucible. Lt. Owen destroyed two FW 190's, Lt. Nicolai also destroyed two FW 190's, while Lts. Peterman and Vandivort destroyed one each, Lt. Dean probably destroyed an ME 109 and Lt. Wainwright damaged one. One of our pilots, Lt. Maye, was missing.

Destroying six, prabably destroying one and damaging one enemy a/c is a good deal on any day. Yet the Skeeter boys went on to silence three 20 mm. gun positions and destroyed 3 motor transports moving sluggishly along the Appian way. The old Roman road was priority No. 1 for strafing, because MT couldn't get off the side.

On January 22, the 79th Fighter Group score board stood as follows:

| | Destroyed | Probably Destroyed | Damaged |
|---|---|---|---|
| 85 Sq. | 18 | 6 | 7 |
| 86 Sq. | 15 | 1 | 8 |
| 87 Sq. | 34 | 5 | 12 |
| Total | 67 | 12 | 27 |

The next day, 86th Squadron engaged two ME 109's who dived into their formation, woggling their wings violently. This gesture of friendliness availed nothing, because one of them was probably destroyed with Lts. Skotnicky and Silsbee sharing the victory; the other was damaged by these two pilots and Lt. Austin.

On the 24th, 87th Sqn. again occupied the center of the stage. Thirty plus ME 109's and FW 190's attacked their formation of 8 Warhawks, led by F/0 Bozzi, in an area west and south of Allbano. F/0 Bozzi in an engagement destroyed the leading FW 190, and his skillful leadership prevented loss of any plane in his flight.

Lt. William Colgan also distinguished himself on this mission. Seeing a pilot bail out whom he thought was from his own squadron, he followed him down, was even preparing to land his aircraft to pick him up, despite the number of enemy a/c. This downed pilot, turned out to be the Jerry, F/O Bozzi had shot down. Lt. Colgan personally claimed 1 ME 109 probably destroyed, another damaged. In the same combat, Lt. Linicome damaged another ME 109.

January 25 found 87 continuing its successful combat operations whil patrolling the convoy lane. Called in to fight over the assault beaches, six P-40's fought ten plus enemy a/c. One FW 190 was destroyed and one ME 109 damaged by Lt. Beck. Lt. Anderson, attacking an ME 109, also scored a "damaged". The 85th Sqn., on a later mission with 15 a/c, intercepted 15 plus ME's and FW's diving through a break in the overcast to bomb Anzio point. Lt. Callum, the Squadron Operations Officer, known to us as "Killer" destroyed a FW 190 while Lt. Duffield destroyed an ME 109. Lts. Proctor and Mathesius each claimed an ME 109 damaged.

It may interest the casual reader to know that we classified an a/c as destroyed when it was seen to "go in", catch fire, lose a wing or other integral part, or when the pilot bailed out. A "probable destroyed" was a ticklish proposition, its determination based usually on the type and amount of damage inflicted and the aircraft's position relative to the ground. An aircraft was classified damaged when pieces flew from it. Seeing tracers go into the fuselage, wing structure or tail surface was not sufficient claim for a damaged. The RAF taught us to underestimate our claims rather than make up superficial successes.

On the 27th, 99 Sqn., the first all-negro American Sqn. to fly in combat, a part of the group since Foggia, ran into a field day. 15 of their Warhawks engaged 16 plus FW 190's pulling out of a bomb run onto Anzio beach. South of Rome, Lt. Ashley saw the FW he'd attacked catch fire and go down. Lt. Roberts destroyed one FW 190. A split claim for an FW destroyed went to Lts. Allen and Baugh. Lts. Toppins and Dietz each claimed a FW 190 destroyed. Another split claim for a FW destroyed was shared by Lts. Rogers and Driver. Damaged FW 190's were credited to Lts. Perry, McCrumsy, Baugh and Major Roberts, the Squadron's C.O.

After lunch, 99 again went into battle. 12 FW 190's and 2 ME's were engaged. Capt. Custis destroyed a FW and also Lt. Hagleson. Lt. Bailey destroyed another while Lt. Lawrence probably destroyed a fourth. In the flight, Lt. Lane parachuted safely, but Lt. Bruce was missing.

Aircraft from 85th Sqn. flew on the same mission, engaging twelve plus enemy aircraft, ME's and 190's. Lts. Stewart and Callum each probably destroyed one and Lt. Benz another.

Group victories for the 27th included 9 FW 190's destroyed, 4 FW 190's probably destroyed and 4 FW 190's damaged.

The Group flew 14 missions on the 28th-battle area and Convoy lane patrols, and fighter bomber missions. 86th Sqn. dropped seven 500 pound bombs on Belmonte with favorable results. The day itself pro-



*Gloryng in the title "Monty's Pets", we were proud of his visits*



*Capodichino a/d was jam-packed with aircraft . . .*



*and many were damaged over Anzio: Lt. Ac Moody inspects a close one.*

ved encouraging with the Group destroying nine enemy a/c, probably destroying two more and damaging 6.

In the morning, 87th Sqn. observed 20 plus FW 190's coming down in their bombing dive on Anzio harbor and beaches. The formation engaged the enemy a/c just after they'd released their bombs. Lt. Colgan damaged one FW 190, destroyed another. Lt. AcMoody probably destroyed another FW. Lt. Owen destroyed one, and noticed that when attacked, these FW's let down their wheels. It's hardly a peaceful gesture, done to slow them down so the pilot could bail out or force the P-40 to overshoot, but the results were completely unsatisfactory. Lt. Dean destroyed another FW. Lts. Peterman, Joh, Bell and Sirman each claimed an FW damaged.

In the mid-day show, 86th Sqn. destroyed two more FW 190's, Lt. Wall credited with one; Lts. Penar and Leuther jointly sharing another.

99th Sqn. destroyed 1 ME, 3 FW's, with Capt. Hall credited with two, Lts. Smith and Dies with one each.

The 28th proved to be one of the finest combat days for allied a/c in the history of the Italian Campaign. Fighter planes protecting the Rome beachhead knocked 21 enemy a/c out of the sky. Flying forts raiding the south of France destroyed 14 more. The combined totals for the 27th & 28th, just two days, brought the number destroyed by fighters up to 85 and the bomber total to 50. Flying in relays from dawn to dusk, Allied fighters dived from above upon the FW's and ME's, chasing them well into Rome.

Said General Cannon, the Commanding General of the 12th Air Force: "It's a grand" show. "You're doing a magnificent job."

February found 79 still at Capodichino, but rumor had once again upset the comparative ease of living. We were going to the Orient, first to India and then into the wilds of Burma. We didn't go.

79, during this leap year, continued its Anzio patrols and also fighter bomber missions in support of the 5th Army front in the hills around Cassino. We dropped bombs on the German concentrations pushing down the Anzio road and threatening the tired invasion forces at the beachhead. We bombed the Cassino Monastery, a group of buildings near Carroceto station known as "the Factory", and tanks hidden beneath netting and trees beside Mussolini's roads and canals.

The Frosinone Rome road used to be called Flak Valley, but, since the Anzio landing, intense accurate AA fire, both light & heavy, covered the areas of Velletri, Genzano, and Albano, bordering the two small lakes southeast of Rome. Every target attacked by 79 during this period was protected by flak.

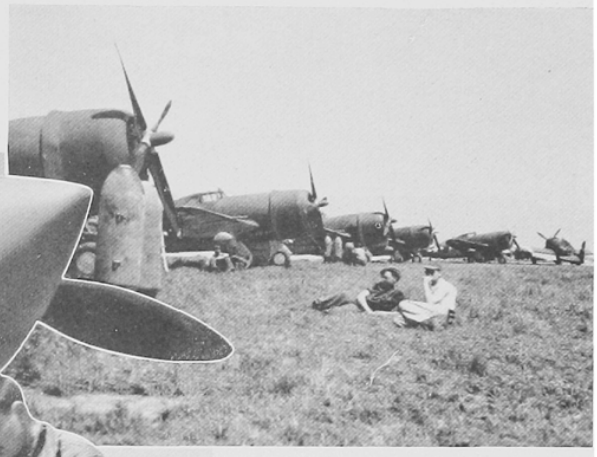
An emergency strip had been levelled at Nettuno, but this was under shellfire. Some of our pilots made so many landings here that a special fraternity of those who's returned by LST. boats had to be created. Lts. Peterman and Sirman of 87 Sqn. spent as much time at the strip as they did at their Officer's Mess-even on liquid-ration nights. Lt. Scheumack of 85 Sqn. had an unforgettable adventure at Nettuno. In a dogfight on the 19th, he saw his wing shot up by flak. Several feet of ammunition belt hung free and his left aileron ceased functioning. Landing at Nettuno he discovered himself to be alone, since the German shelling had forced service personnel to withdraw. He repaired his damaged a/c with whatever bits of wire he could scrounge, whilst shells burst annoyingly close, then took to the air. Upon arriving at base the eloquently confirmed the fighter pilot's idea that it's a lot safer upstairs.

On certain occasions our patrols spotted enemy a/c but the Huns refused engagements, preferring to streak for their home bases North of Rome. 99 Sqn., already known for their work on "D" day, attacked ten FW's on the 5th with seven of their P-40's. One FW was destroyed in the encounter, but one of their pilots was missing. 87 and 85 Sqns. on the same day knocked out RR guns which had been shelling the beachhead with serious results.

Two days later 99 Sqn. again contacted the enemy, destroying 3 FW's with no loss to themselves. About an hour later 85 Sqn., with eight a/c, attacked over 20 FW's which had hoped to bomb harbor installations at Anzio. Six or eight ME 109's flew invitingly and lazily about hoping to divert 85th Sqn. from the FW's. The ruse helped only to destroy 4 FW 190's, 2 ME 109's and damaged 2 FW 190's. 85, not satisfied with the stimulation of a dogfight, knocked out MT and guns by strafing the Appian way while en route to base. In their afternoon show, 85 destroyed 2 more FW's. 87 also figured in the day's shooting when one of eight FW's diving past their patrol formation was destroyed. On the 5th of Feb., 79 Group destroyed 12 enemy a/c and damaged 2. (No wonder we didn't go to China.)



migliano we enjoyed modern apartments

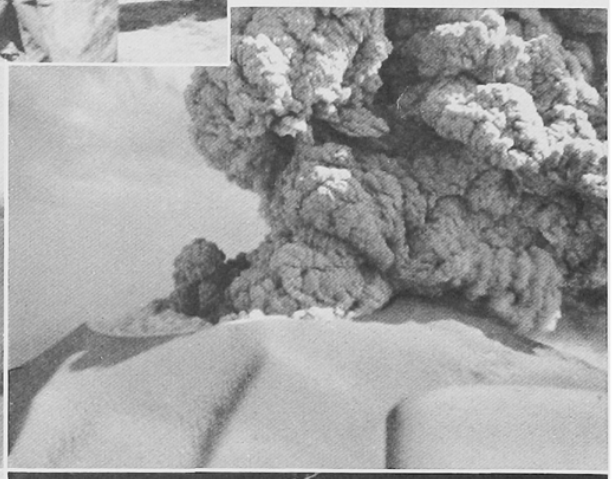


*It was "End of the trail"*
*for the gallant Warhawk*



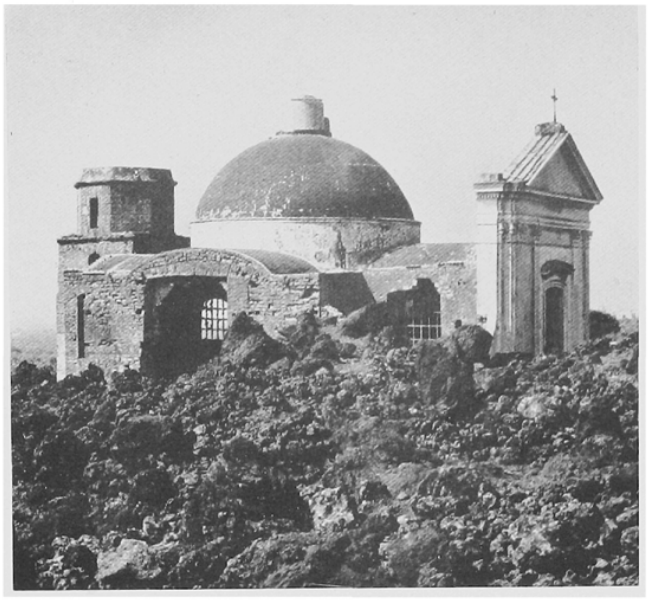
*as we switched to Thunderbolts-*
*while Vesuvius smoldered,*
*and finally busted wide open*



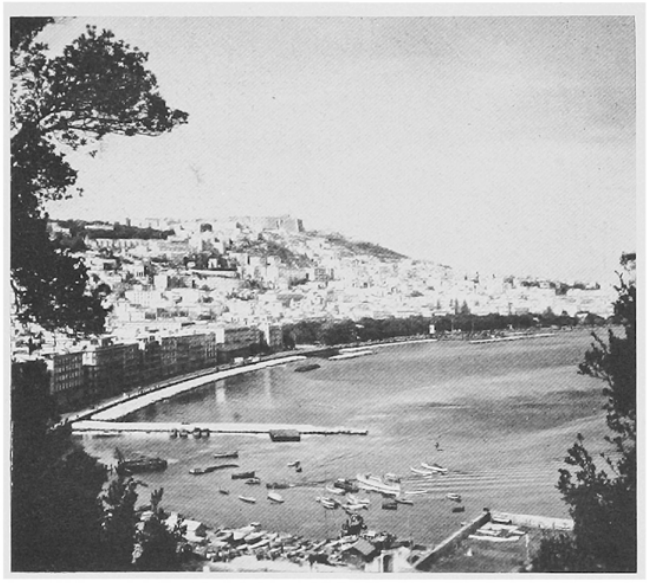








*Wiping out several town's before it was through*



*But Naples survived . . . was oft visited . . .*



*and Enlisted Men staged a memorable dance*

On the 10th of February, despite intermittent snow and rain squalls, 87 Sqn. attacked 8 FW's which had attempted to bomb our positions near Anzio. One FW was destroyed and one damaged.

As of February 10, 1944 the 79 Fighter Group Victories were:

| | Destroyed | Probably Destroyed | Damaged |
|---|---|---|---|
| 85 Sq. | 29 | 8 | 11 |
| 86 Sq. | 17 | 2 | 9 |
| 87 Sq. | 41 | 7 | 24 |
| 99 Sq. | 17 | 4 | 6 |
| Total | 104 | 21 | 50 |

131 sorties were flown on February 13th. German counter-attacks were broken up, gun positions blasted, tunnels blocked, supply dumps blown up, and, as an anti-climax, one FW 190 was damaged by 86 Sqn.

Around the middle of February, a group of Officers flew to Cairo and Palestine in the B-25. As a reminder of former days over the western desert, a violent sandstorm rising above 15,000 feet, forced the a/c to 18,000 feet.

Lt. Hartman was lost to 87 on the 17th, and Lt. Mace, 86 Sq., the next day failed to return from his first combat mission. Lt. Dunlap, 99 Sqn., was killed in action on the 21st when his a/c crashed at Nettuno.

On the 19th, 85 Sqn. destroyed 1 FW 190 and damaged 4 others while 86 Sqn. claimed 1 ME 109 damaged.

*"One month in the Naples area has been an interesting experience to most of us accustomed to canvas and the easy discipline of field conditions. MP officers of all grades walk the Via Roma, Naples' principle street. They ask Lieutenants to show their Naples' pass, AGO card and dog tags; Captains usually don't show their dog tags The writer isn't at all sure what they do to Majors or other field grades.*

*"The weather has been nearly as provoking as these sauntering inspectors. Rain can soften Capodichino into a mire before noon and then a tantalizing sun, warm and spring-like, breaks through the clouds to dry the field.*

*Up on the beachhead the infantry boys are still taking it, hoping that soon weather, supplies and luck will help them take the hill that commands the way to Rome. On the map, the bombline drawn in yellow on acetate, looks smaller and smaller but there is no sign of quitting near Anzio, and the Hun propaganda machine stripped its gears when it dated the day our forces would be driven into the sea."*

On March 14, 1944 the 79th Fighter Group completed as a unit one year of active combat.

In recalling the 1,429 missions, 15,481 sorties flown in these twelve months we thought of Lt. Col. Peter McGoldrick who was killed at Charing Cross, Solum, in November of 1942, just after El Alamein. We thought of Lt. Robert Guillebeau and Capt. Raymond Palermo who were killed in action, flying with the 57th Fighter Group. We thought of all the pilots, since, who did not return.

Capodichino was becoming dusty, not so annoying as Darragh near Beni Ulid in the desert, but dusty enough to cause billowing clouds of dirt from every propwash. And Vesuvius acted up like a boasting monument of Fascist comic-opera. It's lava mixed with the volcanic dust destroyed houses and aircraft; made airdromes unserviceable. By the middle of March, Capodichino was used by an A-20 Group, another P-40 Group, the remnants of a B-25 outfit which had lost all but three aircraft from lava rocks, M.A.T.S., Air-Sea Rescue Service Branches, and ourselves.

Jerry missed his chance when he raided Naples on the 14th. We had been celebrating our anniversary. At two A.M. the sirens blew and almost immediately the flak opened up. Tracers rolled lazily into the sky, already lightened by a full moon and Kraut flares. The heavy stuff shock the house, rattled the window panes. Then the whistle of a falling bomb, endlessly coming down, until the gratifying KRRUMPH and the realization the bomb missed, missed you anyway. At night the whistle is lazier than by day, and you can't tell the direction or size or amount.

A Brigadier from one of England's famous Guards Regiments entered the "Ops" trailer around the 15th. He wanted a ride to Anzio, couldn't spare the time required in an LST. His entire brigade staff had been wiped out by a shell hit north of the beachhead. We asked him about the fighting there.

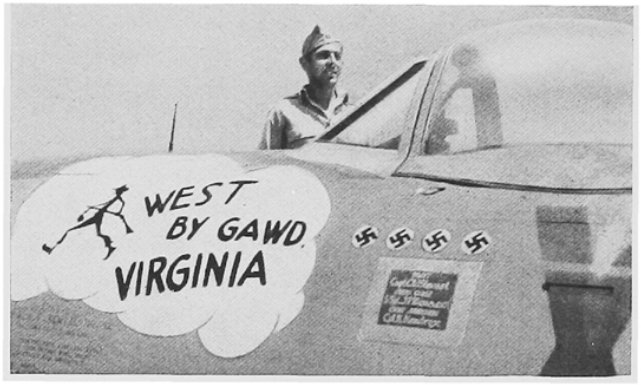
"They're losing men", he said, "but so are we. And there's no rest for us. My men are under fire all the time. And they live in water-filled fox holes. It's not easy, you know".

The Brigadier looked like a Dewar's whiskey ad; monocle, short coat (once featured by civilians in Esquire), faultlessly tailored battle dress, carefully shined shoes. But he was a soldier, otherwise he wouldn't have been a Brigadier in the Guards.

79th Fighter Group continued supporting the armies at Cassino and the beachhead during March—one hundred seventy two missions, 1495 sorties.

On the 8th, Lt. Duffield, 85 Sqn., went down to strafe some M/T after patrolling the beachhead. Hit by small arms fire, he bailed out, later returned to his squadron, and received the Purple Heart.

85 & 86 squadrons by the middle of the month began using P-47's, flying beachhead patrols and bomber escort. 87 & 99 squadrons continued to use the proven P-40's. On the 17th, 85 & 86 Sqns, with 18 Thunderbolts, escorting 24 Mitchell bombers, intercepted more than 10 ME 109's. 85 Sqn. pressed the




*Cap'n Stewart an' his "Shootin'-Arn"*

attack, and Capt. Stewart and Lt. DeFoor destroyed 2 of the ME's. 86 encountered more then 15 ME's dive-bombing Cassino. They fired upon them, but made no claims.

87 Squadron 2 days later flew to attack a large concentration of M/T near Pico. Camouflaged and concealed by mountains, the trucks, half-tracks, and staff cars were very well scattered. Despite the difficulties, 87 destroyed 11, damaged 11. A pilot reported one staff car streaking along the Via Appia disintegrated completely before one short burst from his six. 50 calibre machine guns.

On the 24th, 85 Sqn. again contacted the enemy. One of our pilots, a new boy, Lt. Pringle, was missing, last seen with two ME 109's on his tail. The German, at times, completely passive and nearly non-existent, could still strike with agression. It was a mistake for anyone, whether on the home-front or in Italy to trust to optimism rather that reality. The G.A.F. was not dead.

Lt. Pepper bailed out off Anzio on the 25th; was picked up unharmed just after he'd struck the water.

On the 26th, 87 Sqn. lost Lt. Anderson, who had received a direct hit in the cockpit by an 88mm gun. Just a handful of black puffs were evident as the formation was returning to base from an uneventful Anzio patrol. One of these hit Lt. Anderson.

Lt. Rueschoff was lost to 87 Sqn. on the 28th when he was forced to parachute about ½ mile NW of base due to engine failure. He was killed when his chute failed to open after jumping from a very low altitude. The funeral was held 2 days later. Standing bareheaded in a cold drizzle, hearing the roar of A-20's as they formed overhead, we felt the dreariness of war. Italian workers were digging fresh graves, uniform slits in easily cut soil, with the dirt piled in an even row. Lt. Rueschoff's flowers lay neatly on the ground, interrupting the monotony of dirt and death.

On the 30th, 85 Squadron was missing four a/c. Actually one pilot, Lt. Scheumack is still missing.

In bad weather on the 31st, Lt. Defoor, also of 85, was last seen to roll over on his back and drop into the sea off the Volturno. Subsequent search missions availed nothing.

Operating out of Capodichino we continued daily missions against the Hun. With all squadrons flying Thunderbolts and carrying two 1000-lb. bombs, close support for the moment ended and a chapter of tactical bombing began. The net-work of roads over which the German had to transport his supplies to the beachhead and 5th Army fronts, and the neat pattern of railway lines strung from Rome northwards like a contorted fan were primary targets. Once again bridges and tunnels became prize objectives. Shipping off the Italian west coast and harbor installations as far north as San Stefano were also attacked. We were to tighten the stranglehold methodically laid on by the bombers.

Take-offs at dawn and at last-light enabled our a/c to catch the Hun as he was pulling in to hide by day and as he was beginning to form into convoys during the night. Again, as in Sicily and the desert, the crew chiefs, armorers, communications men and operations personnel were working 20 hours a day.

For the job done in Africa and Sicily, the Group received a Presidential Citation.

During the month, Major George T. Lee, Skeeter Squadron Commander, and Major John Martin of 85, returned to the States for leave. Both expressed a wish to return to the Group.

### ROME PUSH

The period May and June 1944 marked, indelibly, the 79th Fighter Group as one of the greatest all-around fighting machines ever assembled. When the final surge for Rome was planned, the 79th was assigned an area north of the Eternal City. Its job was to interdict all avenues of communications, preventing reinforcements and supplies reaching the enemy. The measure of success is best told by the statement that not one train moved in the area the 79th was "guarding". So telling was the damage that the enemy was reduced to using horse-drawn carts in his "planned-withdrawal", and, even this type of escape was used very sparingly in the daylight hours, because of the German respect for dive bombing and strafing. On one day the Group set a figure (which we seriously doubt had ever been surpassed by any group) when 153 tons of bombs were dropped on objectives in enemy territory.

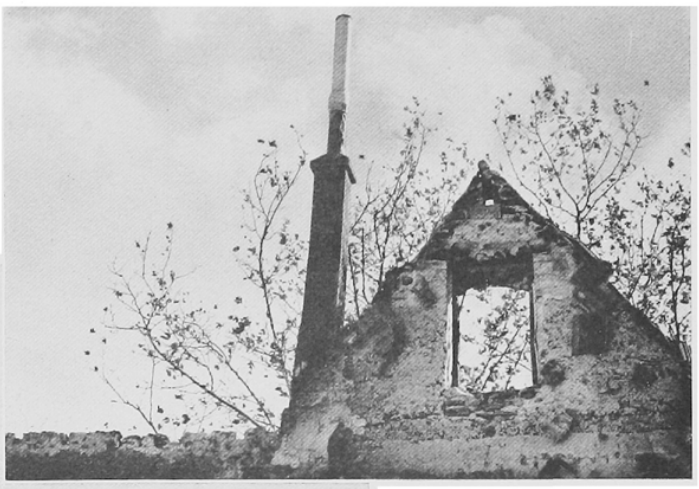
From the first of May until the 11th of June, Pomigliano Air Base was the operational home of the 79th, but when Rome fell and the foe had retreated many miles beyond, the strain on the plane's range made a move imperative.

# Corsica

It came on June 11th when an air echelon took off from Pomigliano and landed at Serragia Airfield on the Island of Corsica. The new field was located about 20 miles south of Bastia, second largest city on the island. Corsica is an island, practically untouched by the advancing hand of civilization, and is composed chiefly of mountains, narrow roads, unfriendly people, a rugged coast line and beautiful sandy beaches. Its chief claim to fame is the fact that Napoleon Bonaparte was born in its largest town, Ajaccio.

This fast move by air was necessary to have the group's support, if needed, for the impending invasion of Elba Island. This was a small invasion but interesting because French troops, spearheaded by British Commandos, supported by Allied Air Forces including the 4th French Group, were doing the entire show, the first time the French had operated as a separate army, proving ground for the coming Southern France invasion. The reasons for taking the Island were to deny



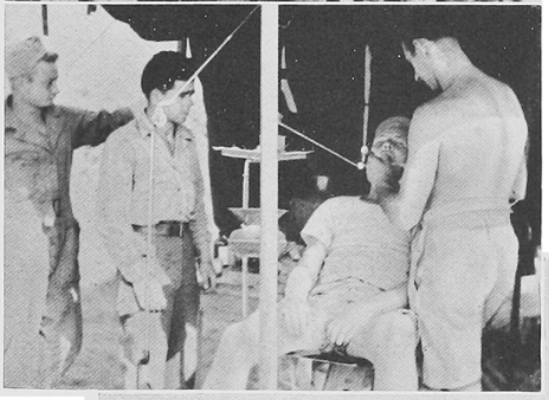




*We came to Corsica by LST and found it a rustic spot of Rocks, Streams, and Mountains*





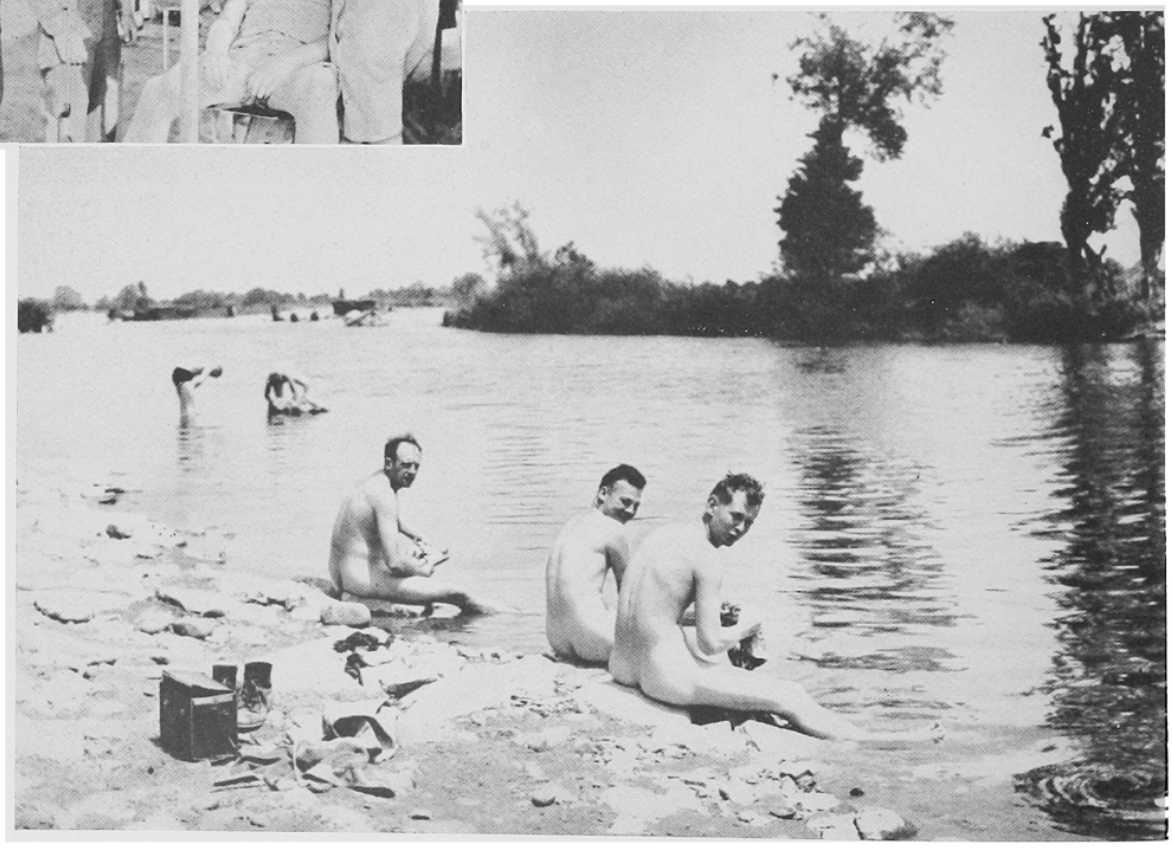


the enemy the use of Piombino channel by artillery fire, to secure bases for our small naval craft, and to construct a landing strip and radar stations at Pianosa. We continued to operate over Italy for several days but on June 16, 17, and 18th, attacked docks on Elba, shipping, and some gun positions with excellent results. The invasion took place on June 18th and after a short stiff resistance absorbed by the British shock troops, we were not called on for further effort.

The original plans had been for this air echelon to return to Italy and join the Group at a base in the Rome area, but instead the ground personnel found themselves moving to Corsica.

The "B" party movement from Pomigliano, Italy, to Corsica in LSTs started June 17th, ending June 19th with disembarkation at Porto Vecchio, after a rough water trip. After unloading from the various ships in the convoy, the squadrons and headquarters picked out temporary camp areas for the night, and next day drove north to the permanent bivouac areas near Serragia Airfield. One unforgettable incident of the over-water

*Busy crews ate standing up . . . Paisley Ann Rockwell served "Coffee and–" on D-Day and Every Day . . . dental Patients had plenty of air . . . the streams were always cool*



movement was when baggage from the four units of Group was promiscuously dumped into the hold of one of the boats. The rough trip completed the debacle and when time came to unload, the scramble was really on, resulting in four worried, frantic supply sergeants and many headaches for the GIs that never did catch up with their barracks bags.

The months of May and June, '44, despite the damage to the enemy, were not without our own heartbreaks.



*. . . had to build from scratch,*

85th Squadron had only one pilot loss, Lt. Lawrence Borsheim. 86 and 87 bore the brunt of the losses, 86 having 10 pilots gone and 87 having 11, on the MIA or KIA lists. The Group Commander, Col. Charles W. Stark was lost May 7. From the 86th went: Lt. Michael J. Slater, Lt. Edward G. Letzkus, Lt. Edmund T. Lemmon, Lt. Donald A. Richer, Lt. Merle E. Stafford, Lt. John H. Bothe, Lt. Maurice W. Wilson, Lt. Frank J. Seres, Lt. Louis T. Rouleau and Lt. Stuart L. Bartlett. From the 87th: Capt. Clarence E. Stevens, Lt. Raymond A. Ermis, Lt. Garth E. Thornton, Lt. Robert F. Swenson, Lt. John R. Winslow, Lt. Charles L. Landers, Lt. William



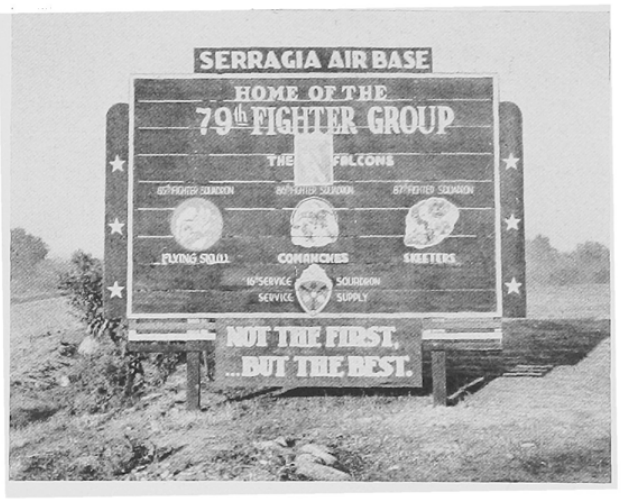
*but soon were back in business . . .*



Pritchard, Lt. Daniel W. Moss, Lt. Robert M. Bitting, Lt. Charles P. Logel and Lt. Damon E. Adkins.

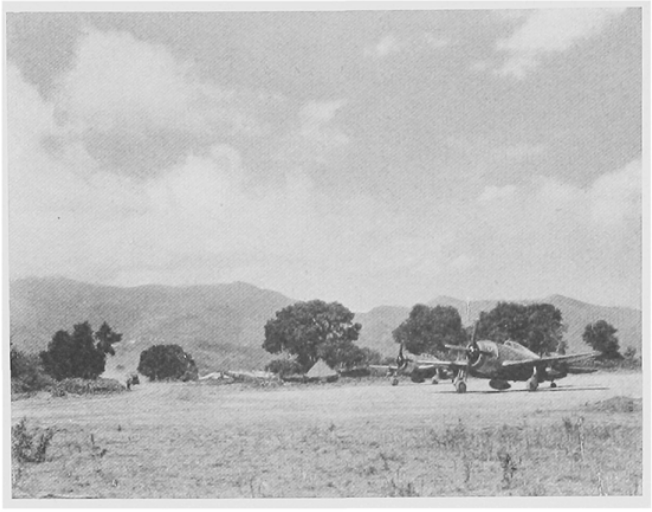
The score of the two months' work:

| | May | June |
|---|---|---|
| Ammo expended | 544,579 rounds | 495,185 rounds |
| Bombs dropped | 4,005,500 pounds (2002¾ tons) | 2,432,000 pounds (1216 tons) |
| Total sorties | 2545 | 1868 |
| Enemy aircraft destroyed | 11 | 2 |
| Enemy aircraft probables | 1 | 1 |
| Enemy aircraft damaged | 6 | 3 |




*. . . and advertising it*

| | May | June |
|---|---|---|
| Our aircraft lost (destroyed) | 15 | 9 |
| Our aircraft missing | 3 | 0 |
| Our aircraft damaged | 51 | 51 |
| Direct hits on roads | 609 | 397 |
| Direct hits on railroads | 495 | 378 |
| Direct hits on buildings | 125 | 14 |
| Motor Transport flamers | 305 | 387-plus |
| Motor Transport destroyed | 109 | 153-plus |
| Motor Transport damaged | 272 | 409-plus |



*"Hardstands" were nestled —*

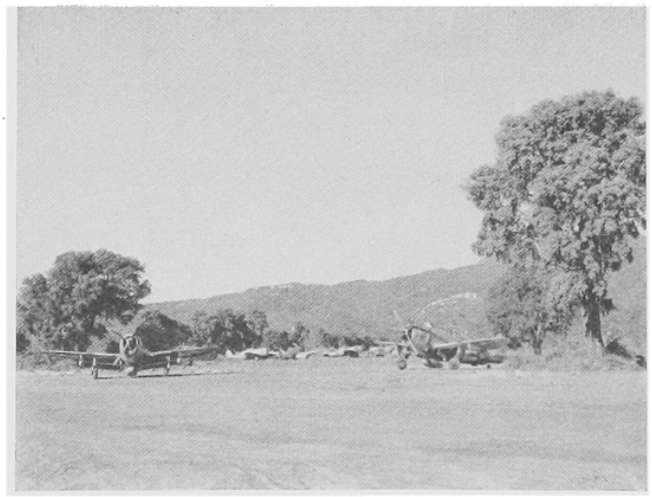
| | May | June |
|---|---|---|
| Bridges destroyed or damaged | 56 | 51 |
| Ack-ack positions silenced | 13 | 16 |
| R.R. cars destroyed | 29 | 329-plus |
| R.R. cars damaged | 26 | 192-plus |

Also for May: 3 power houses destroyed; 3 locomotives destroyed and three damaged; 4 trains destroyed; 3 barges destroyed; 7 tanks destroyed; 2 e/a flamers on ground and 2 e/a damaged on ground.

Also for June: 2 e/a destroyed on ground; 6 locomotives destroyed and 11 damaged; boats (fishing and 100' boats) 33 damaged, 22 destroyed and 5 flamers; 1 aircraft carrier destroyed; 5 ammunition dumps destroyed; 2 viaducts damaged and 1 destroyed; 6 barges destroyed, 9 damaged and 1 flamer.

In these two months 181 road bridges and 175 railroad bridges were destroyed.

The month of July 1944 witnessed more of the smooth-working cooperation and close-support for which the 79th Fighter Group was noted. France was added to the list.



*among the Cork-Oak trees*

One of the finest examples of inter-squadron collaboration was exhibited when 85 and 87 Squadrons went to France on a combined assault against an enemy airfield. 87 flew top cover for 85. When the drome was reached 85 made several passes at the planes dispersed on the ground, and, when their ammunition was practically expended, exchanged places with 87 allowing the "Skeeters" to do a bit of fancy shooting. When the planes set course for home, some 20 plus first-line enemy a/c had been destroyed or damaged. Types included JU-88s and JU-52s; Dor-217s; He 111s; ME 109s and gliders. We lost one plane.

The enemy in the air was also decisively whipped each time he showed his wings. Eight ME 109's and one FW 190 being destroyed; one FW 190 probably destroyed; and five ME 109's damaged. This with no loss to the Group. The highlight of the air warfare was reached when 86 Sqn. was jumped by 11 plus ME 109's. Terrific dog fights ensued and when the score was marked down, it showed "Jerry" had lost six; one damaged; and had hardly scratched an 86 plane. 7-0 is a good score in any game.

One bridge, spanning the Po River, was a thorn in the foot to Allied plans. Several medium bomber units were sent to "get it" but to no avail. Finally, "Old Faithful Falcon" was invited to dive bomb it. Two squadrons sent 12 a/c each, and out of the total of 48 500 lb. bombs, close to 20 were direct hits and 20-plus were very near misses, which rendered the bridge unserviceable.

On the lighter side, some lucky men were given leaves, passes and furloughs. 79th men roamed from Rome to Naples to Alexandria to Cairo, enjoying well earned rests. A new steel matted runway was installed on Serragia Airfield for better and safer operation. Softball and hardball, swimming, ping-pong, Cap Corse, "dives" in Bastia, the inevitable vino and movies did their best to divert war weary minds. Quite a few men left the Group, on rotation, for the niceties of the U. S. A.

Statistics for the month are cold, and fail to tell the grief in losing men like Lt. Robert R. Ryan, 86; Lt. George W. Vaccaro, 87; and Lt. Noel Sonnichsenm 87. They are listed as missing in action.

For the month of July, 206,325 rounds of ammunition were expended; 562 ¼-tons or 1,124,500 pounds



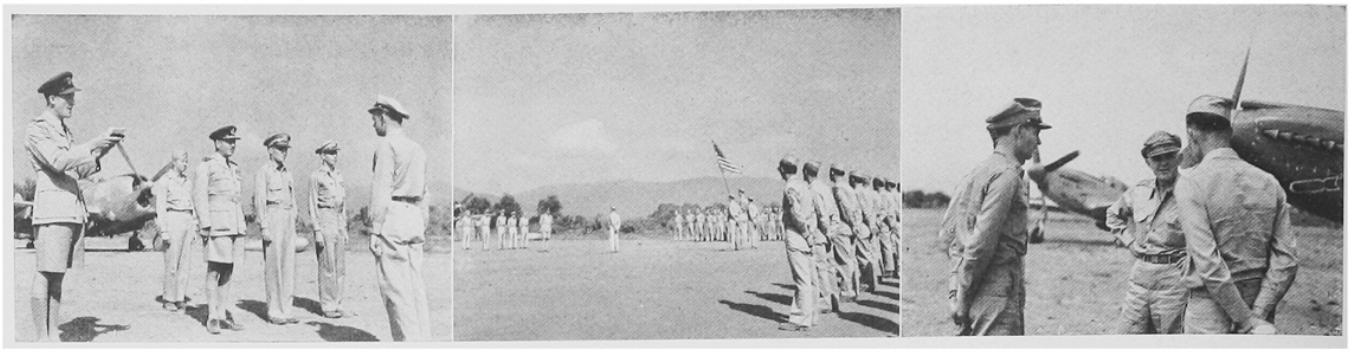
*Missions took off from Serragia dawn to dusk, bound for France or the Po Valley*

of bombs were dropped; nine enemy a/c were destroyed, one probably destroyed and five damaged, to bring the Group's total to read: 134 a/c destroyed, 25 probably destroyed and 66 damaged.

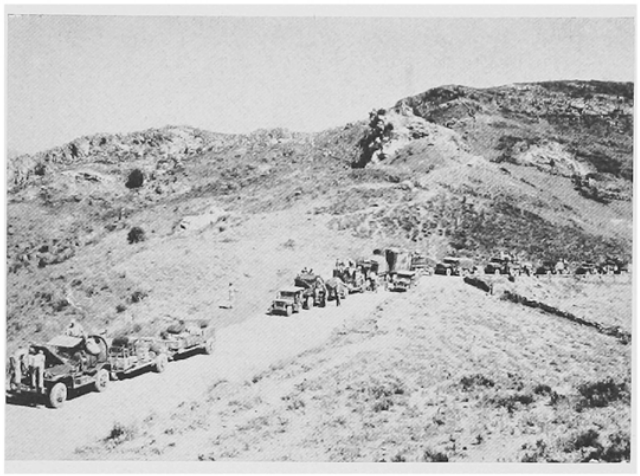
| Item | Destroyed | Damaged |
|---|---|---|
| Motor Transport | 21 | 13 |
| RR Locomotives | 56 | 16 |
| RR cars | 71 | 127 |
| Gun positions | 12 | |
| RR Bridges | 20 | 12 |
| Highway Bridges | 10 | 6 |
| Ammunition Dump | | 3 |
| Supply Dumps | 2 | 4 |
| Horse Drawn Vehicles | 4 | |
| Aircraft on ground | 13 | 9 |
| Miscellaneous | 13 | 22 |
| RR Tunnels | 1 | 1 |
| Power lines | 1 | |
| Concrete mixers | 3 | |
| Small arms posts | 3 | |
| Pontoon Bridges | 1 | |
| Hangar | | 1 |
| Bivouac Area | | 1 |
| Factory | | 1 |

Also: "E" Boats; 4 sunk, 2 probably sunk and 2 damaged; 4 complete and 30 partial road blocks; 145 complete and 2 partial railroad cuts.

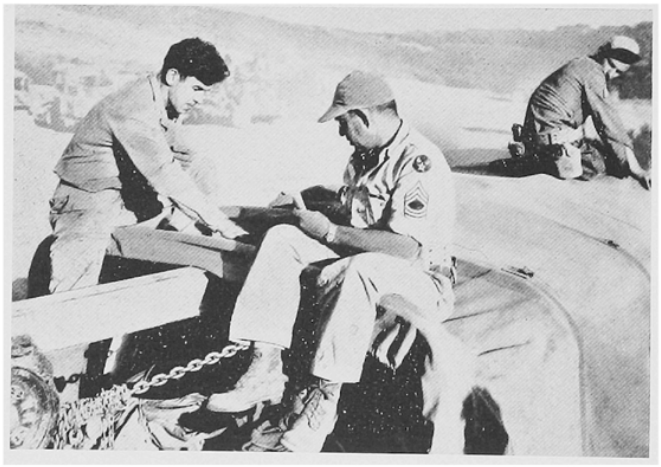
Starting August on Corsica, 79th Thunderbolts supported the invasion of Southern France and sustained it by repeated sallies against German endeavors in the areas of Nice, Cannes, St. Raphael, Toulon, Aix, Marseilles, Avignon, Montelimar, Valence, Lyon, Besancon, Dijon, and up to Belfort Gap. When the invasion became the most hurried piece of maneuvering in history, when three days' objectives were being taken in one day, Falcon planes were swooping down on the doomed legions of the Wehrmacht and making "Jerry's" stay on earth a "rough deal".

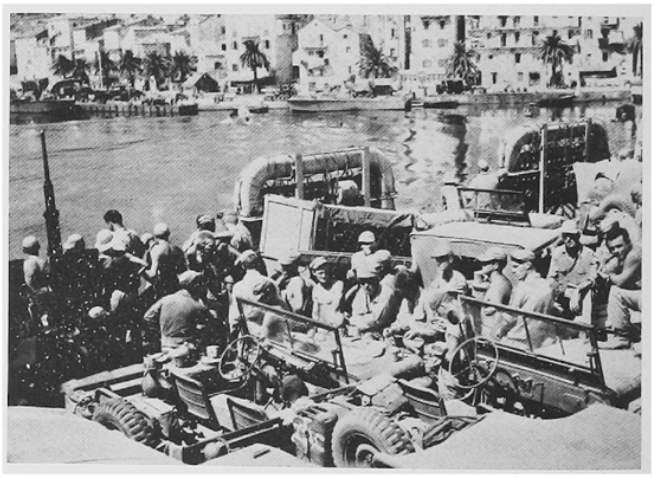


*Col. Martin received the British D.F.C. from Air Marshall, with General D'arcy Attending . . . General "Uncle Joe" Cannon paid us a call on Corsica*



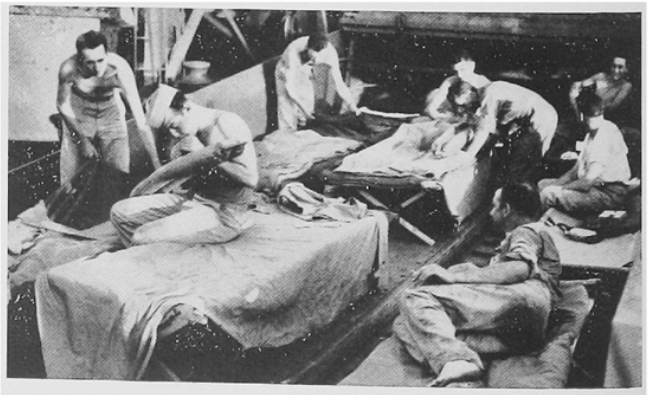






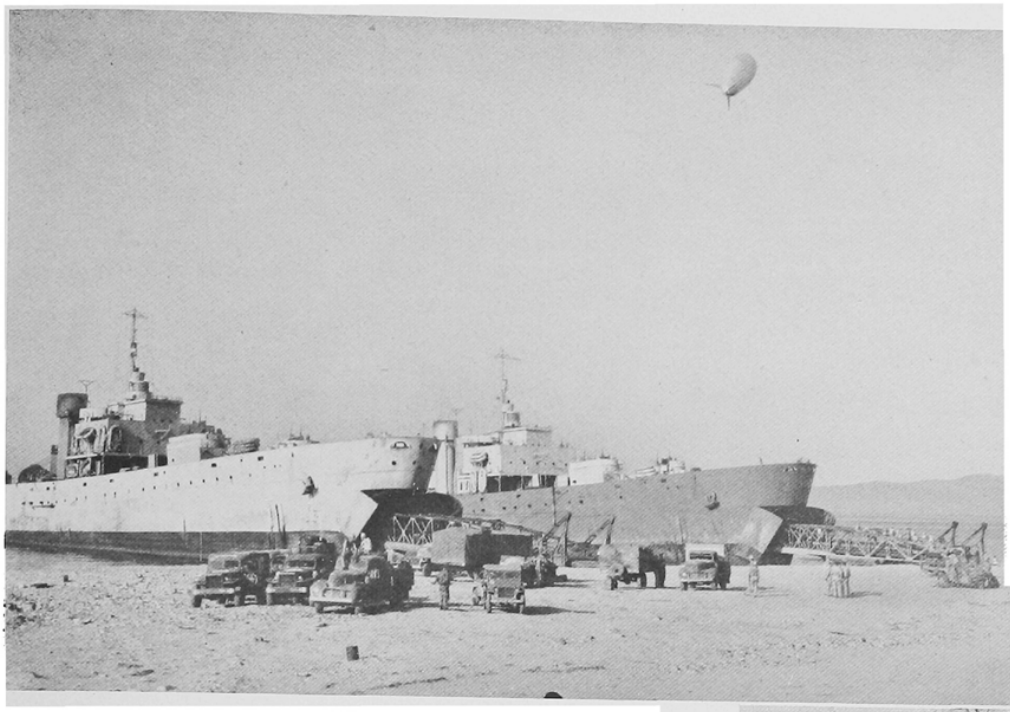


*By Mountain Roads to Calvi staging area —*



*then loaded aboard LST's again*

# Southern France



*Landed on a beach near San Raphael on D-Day plus seven*










*And bivouaced in old "Jerry" Barracks*

Range became a factor and the Group was moved to the mainland of France, landing on a beach near St. Raphael. Outside the town of Frejus were the bivouac areas; the airfield was at nearby St. Raphael. Very dusty it was, and a pall, like an awning, hung over the countryside, but we harried the enemy like the plague.

All kinds of communications were our targets and most were demolished. A long list of bridges, barges, locomotives, tankers, flat cars, motor transport, horse drawn vehicles, etc., was checked off and compiled into the Group's records. The significance of the enemy's growing desperation was best illustrated by the increase in the use of horse drawn equipment.



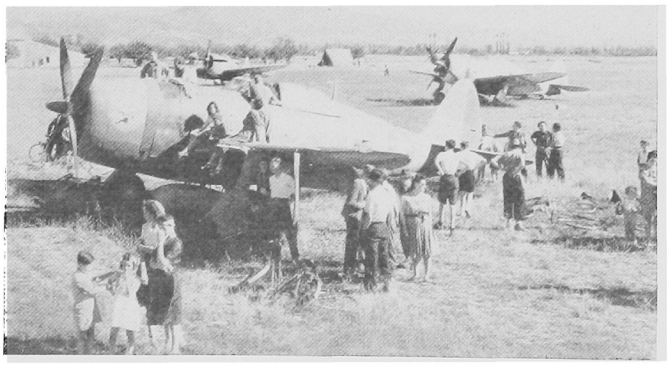
*Gliders, their usefulness past, littered fields near San Raphael*

# The road to Montelimar



*Hospitality was choice along the way*





*Valence airfield looked like old-home-week*

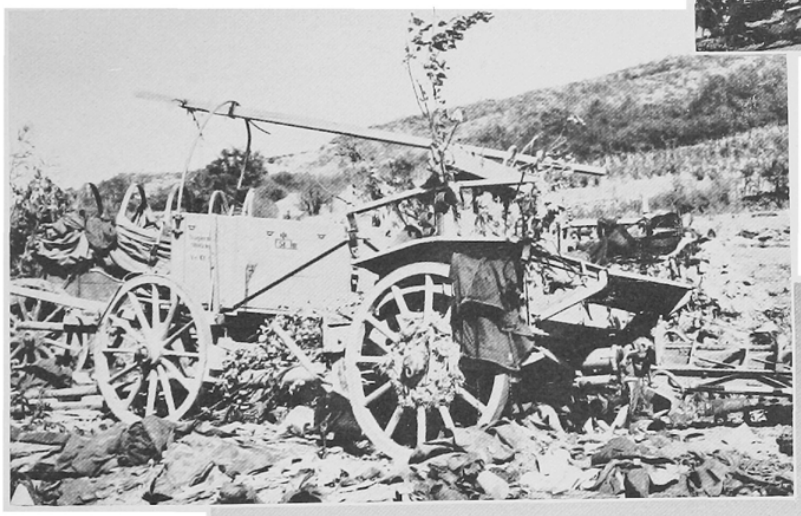
September 1st we departed St. Raphael and the forward unit headed up the Rhone valley to Valence Airfield, occupying it but 18 hours after the German hordes had picked up their tatters and left. The hero-reception the boys received enroute, mitigated, in great part, the two years of tribulation. On the field itself was evidence of the accurate bombing and strafing of 79th pilots, as some 30 plus mutilated Nazi planes were strewn around the field, exactly where they had been hit hy Falcon planes in July. From Valence, the 79th flew the first strafing mission, by Thunderbolts, into Germany proper.

After a short stay at Valence, Bron Airfield, outside Lyon, was the next stop in the "hit" parade. The men were again treated to the wonders of the hospitable French and all were in love with France when orders





*Mile after mile of equipment our Planes had bombed and strafed,*

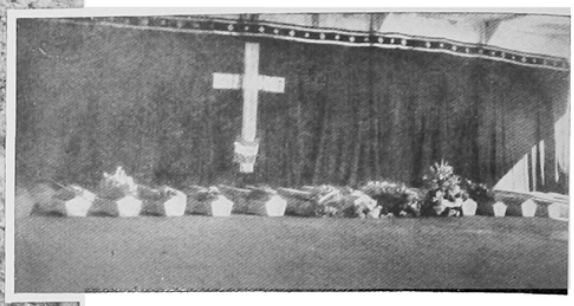


*from horse-drawn vehicles —*



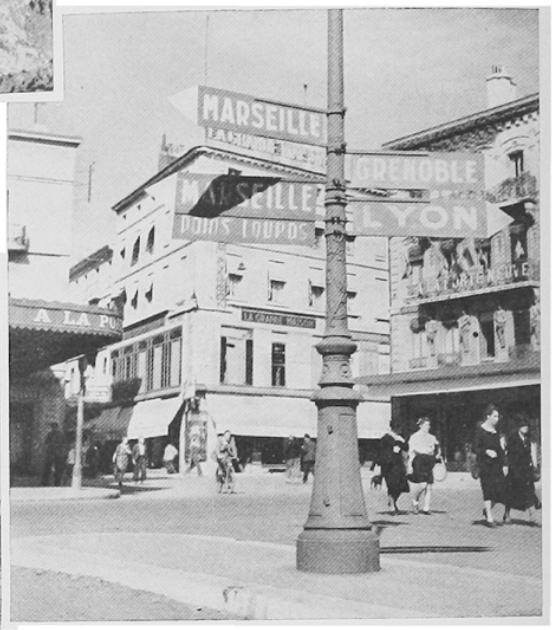
*to railroad guns*



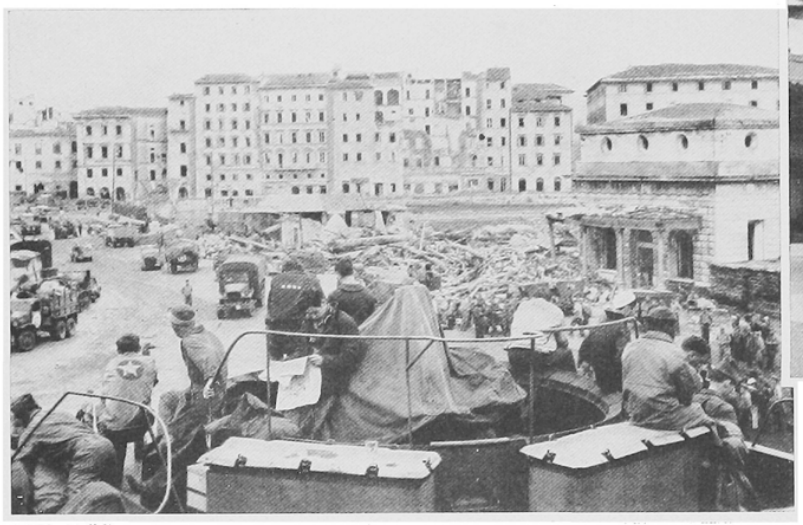


and given Honored rites

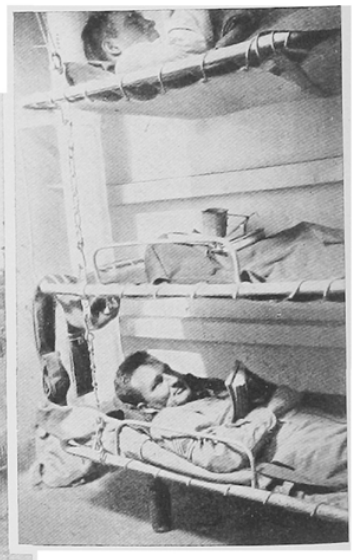
At busy Marseille we embarked for Leghorn




Lyons fêtea us, but there was grim drama too, as French Martyrs were exhumed from a mass grave —





came to move again. Everyone was hopeful of moving farther in France, but our luck had run out; back to Italy we went.

To LeValon, in Southern France, moved the irregular caravan of Falcon gypsies. From this field the air echelon was to depart for Italy, the ground section moved to a Marseilles staging area to await ship convoy.

Some 1000 plus heavy hearts faced the dreary prospects of leaving clean, delightful France, and taking up abode in war-ravaged Italy, as the month of September became a used sheet on a thinning calendar.

Weather in September with its accompanying lack of visibility, somewhat hampered the potentialities of the Group, as only 123 missions could be started and many of these had to return, mission abortive. Only 92,000 pounds of bombs were dropped, but with high accuracy.

In September, three ME 109's were destroyed in the air, making the Group's totals read: 137 destroyed; 25 probably destroyed; and 67 damaged.

Statistics for the months of August and September read:

| | August | | September | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Missions | 195 | | 123 | |
| Total Sorties | 1766 | | 596 | |
| Bombs dropped | 515 1-2 tons, | | 46 tons | |
| | Dest. | Dam. | Dest. | Dam. |
| Motor Transport | 253 | 323 | 151 | 136 |
| Tanks | | | 5 | 2 |
| RR Locomotives | 5 | 1 | 14 | 5 |
| RR Cars | 189 | 105 | 92 | 39 |
| Gun Positions | 28 | | 8 | 1 |
| RR Bridges | 7 | 5 | | |
| Road Bridges | 4 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Horse drawn vehicles | 24 | 5 | 66 | 523 |
| Enemy aircraft on ground | 30 | 48 | 5 | 16 |
| Miscellaneous buildings | 13 | 15 | 1 | 4 |
| Horses | 102 | 5 | 406 | |

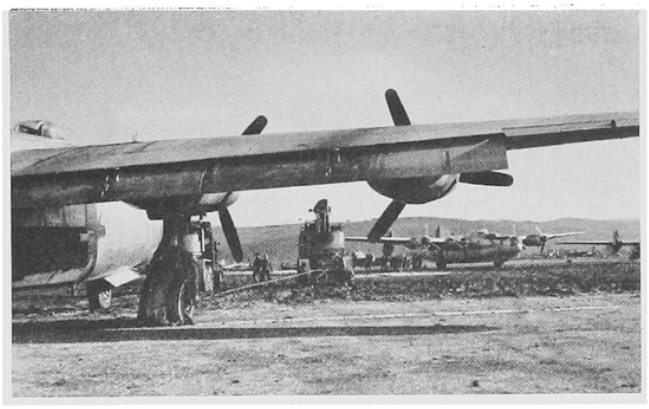
Also in August: Destroyed: 6 fuel trailers; 2 barges; 1 chemical factory; 1 repair shop; 1 warehouse. Damaged: 2 radar stations; 3 mobile guns; 1 harbor installation; 1 observation tower; 4 hangars. Probably sank one 500 foot cargo ship; damaged 17 other ships; created 45 complete and 20 partial road blocks; and created 78 complete RR cuts.

Also in September: Destroyed 2 mobile guns; destroyed 3 ME 109's in the air; prob. sunk one barge; created 1 road block and 3 RR cuts.

# Encora Italia

October started with the entire Group hopping off to Jesi Airfield, Italy. The flying personnel arrived in Italy the same day they departed France, while the ground movement, including motor convoy, took seven-plus days. We were rejoining DAF once again, now the only American Group with them.

The reception in Italy was just what we were dreading; rain, mud and cold, making up the receiving committee. The bivouac areas were a true-to-life "Mudville" and the intermittent rains kept the goo gooey.



*Crippled "Libs" and "Forts" limped in often —*

The airfield at Jesi had a concrete runway, but the dispersal areas were inches deep in mud. There was plenty of air traffic; plenty of excitement. The big bombers returning from their long hauls to Germany,



*unable to make their home fields*

provided most of the thrills, with their radios out, their landing gear shot away, their engines "feathered", low on gas, and other troubles that accurate ack-ack can cause.

The first rocket mission in the Group's history was flown on October 19, led by Lt. Col. Melvin J. Nielsen, our commanding officer. This type of attack was continued throughout the month. Though all but 72 missions were grounded by weather the tremendous destructive power of rockets was revealed for the first time to the utmost discomfort of the enemy on the Adriatic front. These projectiles were estimated to have the hitting force of a 105 mm. howitzer.

Close support work was carried out, on occasion, in plain view of our forward troops. This critical audience was treated to about 100 direct rocket hits on enemy strongholds, located within "easy" walking distance from where our troops were entrenched. Congratulatory messages were received and all were high in praise as to the accuracy of the rockets and the lift to the morale of the forward detachments.

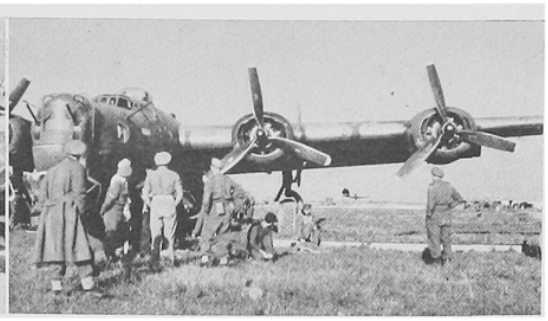
One such message was received from Brigadier Shoosaith of the Tenth British Infantry Brigade, which read:

*"Please accept our grateful thanks and genuine admiration for the brilliant attacks by your rocket firing Thunderbolts. The deadliness and accuracy of your attacks thrilled and stimulated all of our boys to no ordinary degree. Come up and see us again just as soon as you can."*

That the missions were so successful was further tribute to the skill and the courage of our pilots, for the targets were being doggedly defended with anti-aircraft fire. At times the combination of ack-ack and ground fire was so intense that pilots whimsically reported the target area obscured by 1/10 clouds and 9/10 flak.

In the month of October, 694 500-lb. bombs were carried, and of the bombs dropped and visible, 244 were direct hits. Many targets were obscured and the results couldn't be observed. When the Group began to function as a rocket carrying outfit, bombs had to be left off, but 444 rockets were carried and 97 direct hits were obtained. In the month 72 missions (447 sorties) were flown.





October Statistics:

| | Destroyed | Damaged | | Destroyed | Damaged |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Motor Transport | 18 | 9 | RR Bridges | 2 | 7 |
| RR Locomotives | 6 | 1 | Hghw. Bridges | 4 | 6 |
| RR Cars | 15 | 49 | Misc. Bldgs. | 4 | — |
| Gun Positions | 1 | | | | |

Also: Two barges sunk; nine barges probably sunk and 12 barges damaged; one 100 foot boat destroyed; one 250 foot boat probably sunk; one 300 foot boat probably sunk; one partial road block and 34 complete railroad cuts.

November and December found the 79th upholding the finest traditions of the DAF. As American standard-bearer in this famed air arm, the Falcons, armed with rockets, machine guns, and bombs, roamed the stretches of Northeastern Italy "clobbering" a hapless opponent. Only 40 days were fit for operations and on some days missions were abortive due to target weather.

In November the Squadrons were billeted in tents and in plenty of mud which became deeper and stickier. At month's end we moved to decent living quarters.

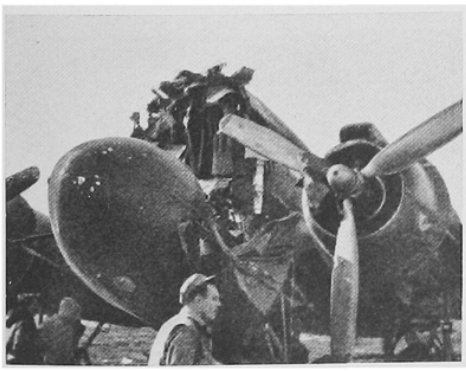
On November 28, Col. Gladwyn E. Pinkston assumed command of the 79th. He came to us from the XXII TAC and had been with the 87th Fighter Wing.

303 missions were flown in these two months for a total of 2099 sorties including, every type of mission that a fighter-bomber can be used on even to sea rescue work and submarine chase.

That the DAF was a solid air force with a single purpose is exemplified by the type of missions flown. One such instance witnessed two squadrons of Thunderbolts, rocket armed, and two squadrons of Warhawks from 239 Wing, bomb armed, move to a common target. It was a transformer station near Verona, Italy—one of many objectives in a co-ordinated attack by Allied air power in the Mediterranean to knock out railroad electric power from Verona to Innsbruck. Our target was destroyed on schedule.

Another example of solidarity and the use of air power as an adjunct to ground power was shown by the request of Army Hq., on 13 November, to send up rocket carrying planes as a preliminary to a ground attack. 86 and 87 Sqns. were sent and blasted enemy strongholds that were preventing an advance by the 8th Army. The advancing Brigade Commander sent the following wire: *"Attack most successful. Our casualties lightest (only just reached double figures) sustained in any similar operation. We took 106 prisoners"*

On Dec. 17th, at Fano Airfield, the 86th Sqn. sustained one of the worst blows of its overseas tour, when a P-51 failed to negotiate a take-off and plowed into revetments occupied by 86th planes and 86th men. One man, S/Sgt. Gerald Ervin, was killed, seven more were hit by shrapnel when one of the Mustang's bombs exploded; two more were hospitalized from injury; three planes were demolished and ten more planes were cracked up in varying degrees.







When "A" and "B" parties moved from Jesi to Fano, they were bathed in Italian liquid sunshine, and sad, sodden soldiers moved into well constructed billets on the outskirts of the town of Fano.

The figures for the 40 days of flying in both months, aren't too impressive. Not listed are the hours of alert spent by pilots and ground personnel. Almost every daylight hour of every day was spent in watchful waiting for weather to clear.

Another overseas year ended. Now, rotation and furloughs were giving the men some hope of respite.

Here are the highlights for November and December:

| | November | December |
|---|---|---|
| Bombs expended | 253½ tons | 319¾ tons |
| Rockets expended | 1208 | 3130 |
| Ammunition expended | 168,540 rounds | 97,070 rounds |
| Total Sorties | 940 | 1159 |
| Total missions | 141 | 162 |
| Barges sunk | 9 | 1 |
| Barges probably sunk | 1 | 1 |
| Barges damaged | 11 | 10 |
| RR Cuts, complete | 45 | 117 |
| Road blocks, complete | — | 2 |
| Road blocks, partial | 13 | 5 |

| | November | | December | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Dest. | Dam. | Dest. | Dam. |
| Motor Transport | 3 | 10 | 3 | 5 |
| Locomotives | 28 | 1 | 12 | 14 |
| RR cars | 48 | 97 | 85 | 80 |
| RR bridges | 5 | 3 | 4 | 11 |
| Highway bridges | 4 | 10 | — | 3 |
| Fortified bldgs. | 54 | 33 | 38 | 21 |
| Gun positions | 5 | — | 2 | — |
| Observation posts | — | — | 1 | 1 |
| Ammo dumps | 1 | — | 1 | — |
| Fuel dumps | — | — | 4 | — |
| Supply dumps | — | 1 | — | — |
| Horse-drawn vehicles | — | — | 4 | 10 |
| Horses | — | — | 10 | — |
| Enemy aircraft (on ground) | — | — | — | 3 |

1945 started out rather slowly due to poor weather both in Italy and Yugoslavia. What missions were flown attacked communications targets in North Italy or did recces in the Balkans. Toward the end of January came the beginning of operations in one of the best train-hunting grounds the Group ever recce'd. A mission penetrated into the Villach-Klagenfurt area with good results; this area later became the graveyard for large numbers of men and quantities of materiel moving out of the Balkans.

February was spent at Fano in rather a restless state because of long hours on the line "sweating out" the weather which covered the field in thick haze. During the first 18 days, weather conditions were still poor, but 38 missions and 303 sorties were flown in 2 days of full operations and 8 days of partial operations. The weather "broke" on the 19th and held for the rest of the month which resulted in 12 full days of operations, 8 days of partial operations, 145 missions or 1154 sorties.

The Group effort was equally divided among three types of operations. Armed Recces accounting for 49, Fighter Bomber for 56, and the remaining 40 being taken up with Weather Recces, Air Sea Searches and Escorts for medium bombers.

The majority of Armed Recces covered rail lines in the Ljubljana-Klagenfurt-Villach-Dobbiaco area; although some were flown in the Maribor-Celje-Zagreb region. Jerry was most co-operative in presenting Locos and TRGs for targets, so it was the exception and not the rule when a flight returned without a collection of scalps. Best hunting was found in the Villach-Klagenfurt areas.

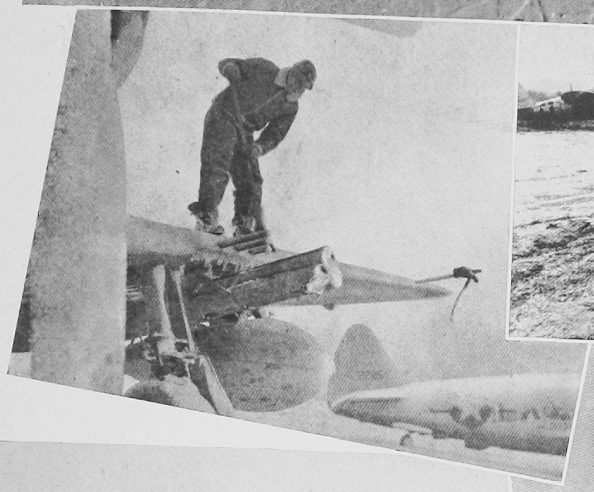
Three highlights of the months operations resulted from these Armed Recces. The first was Lt. Hearne receiving the British DFC, upon the recommendation of the A. O. C. He led a mission in some very soupy weather, through a hole in the overcast, to collect 2 locos destroyed, 6 locos damaged, 7 TRGs destroyed, 22 TRGs damaged, 1 MT destroyed, 4 MT damaged, 2 buildings set on fire; and brought back the flight intact. G-1 Air also sent congratulations for the mission. The second highlight was Major Beck's refusal to be daunted by bad weather in his target area. He cruised over the Alps to collect some locos in Hitler's own Berchtesgaden, for the Group's first flight over Germany from an Italian Base. The third occurred on the next to last day of the month, when several hundred TRGs, a good percentage loaded, were found on the Villach-Lendorf line. They were worked over from early morning until last light with an estimated 75% destroyed or badly damaged. Fires and explosions were spreading as the last flight brought back Aircraft "Cat II" from flying through exploding "TRGs".

Fighter Bomber efforts were in most part directed against rail bridges on the Vicenza-Sacile-Udine-Villach line, with the Grisolera and Latisana road brid-



JESI was muddy





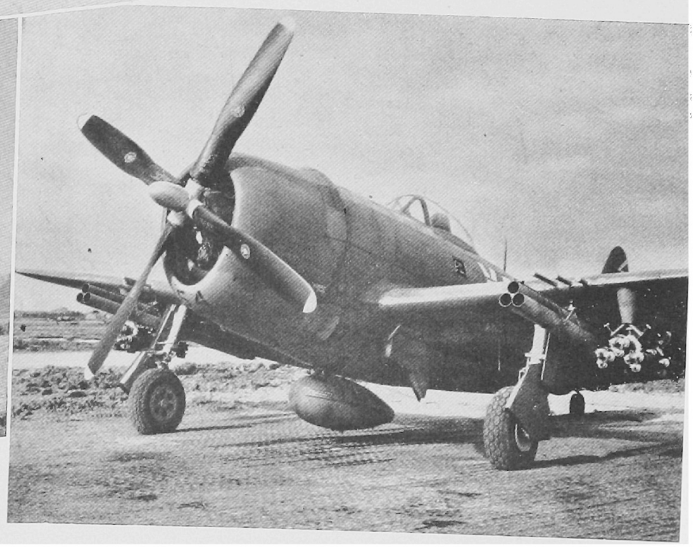


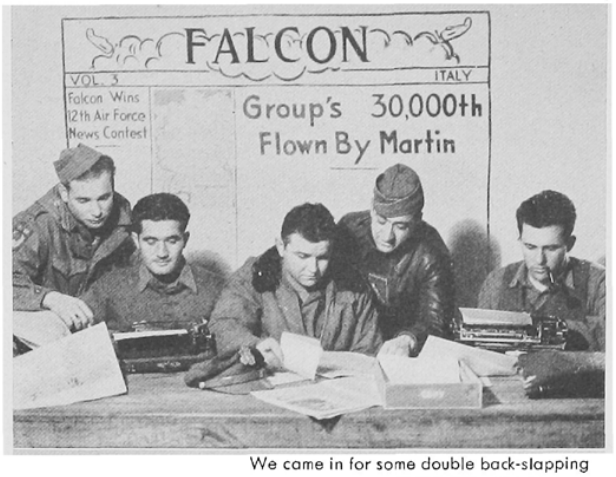
But all types of missions were flown, including anti-flak with rockets and irags



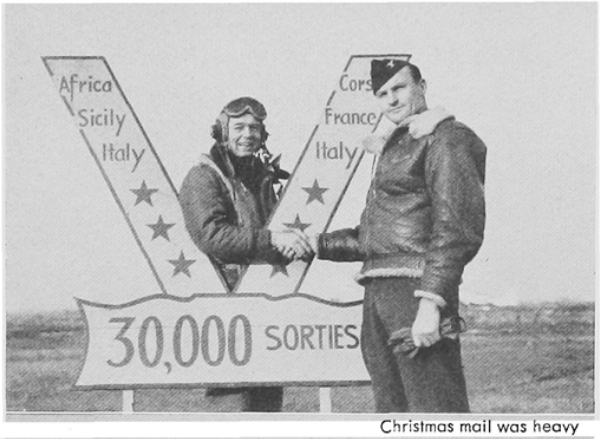
FANO was cold








We came in for some double back-slapping




Christmas mail was heavy





So we shared it with Fano orphans

ges receiving some attention. There was a noted improvement in bombing accuracy and direct hits were made on 6 out of 7 bridges attacked in one day.

During the latter part of the month, Anti-Flak missions were flown in conjunction with bridge attacks, with very satisfactory results. 20 lb. frags and Rocket Projectiles were used, and the first mission was against the Casarsa area where extremely accurate flak had been encountered. 21 aircraft dropped 252×20 lb. frags and fired 126 Rocket Projectiles on the flak positions, just prior to bombing. Dive bombers enjoyed a flak free atmosphere. Later missions were flown against Stanghella and Latisana areas with the same good results.

K-25 Cameras were available for the first time in the Group. Results were not too satisfactory as the best photos are procured after bomb smoke has cleared from the target, which requires an unhealthy second or late pass to be made. Colonel Martin and Captain Fetters voluntarily flew a photo recce one afternoon. Several bridges were covered, that had been attacked by the Group earlier in the day. They had a hot reception at every point from Jerry, and came back with the opinion that that particular type of work should be done from 20,000 feet instead of 1500 feet.

During the month of March, surprisingly good weather conditions enabled 17 full day's operations and 11 partial day's operations. Missions and sorties flown increased sharply over February, totalling for the month as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Missions for March 1945 | 250 |
| Total March 14, 1943-March 31, 1945 | 3,483 |
| Sorties for March, 1945 | 2,214 |
| Total March 14, 1943-March 31, 1945 | 33,822 |

Unfortunately, bad weather prevented a maximum effort to mark the Group's Second Anniversary in operation. However, we were able to put up two weather recces, two anti-flak missions, and two attacks on rail bridges, both of which were well hit.

Missions for the month were mainly fighter-bomber, with 173 of that type, 57 Armed Recces and 20 Bomber Escorts, Weather Recces, Air-Sea-Rescue searches, which were about equally divided.

The Fighter-Bomber effort was directed principally against enemy communications, with the P-47 range

being used against rail lines and bridges in Northern Italy and Yugoslavia. Armed Recces in Italy, Yugoslavia and Austria, found good hunting among the arteries of the hard pressed Hun. Increasing German efforts at protecting these lines has shown up in the flak encountered along the rail lines particularly on the Zagreb-Ljubljana and Celje nets; enemy air effort also increased. Several encounters with ME 109's and jet propelled a/c resulted in 1 ME 109 destroyed and one of our ships lost. Anti-flak missions were continued against some "sticky" bridge targets with generally good results.

The highlight of the month was the attack on Campoformido A/D. One of the largest airfields in North Italy, it was naturally a threat to our medium bombers as well as front line troops. Our primary attacks were on March 18 when 50 Thunderbolts roared across the airdrome and found only 2 JU 88s for targets. One was damaged and M/T, personnel and gun positions were shot up. However, March 20 brought the concentrated effort. Beginning at first light with attacks against known flak positions, the Group hung up a new sortie record—260—in 24 missions. Destruction thundered on the A/D as 8,480×20 frags, 141×100 WPs, 1233 rockets and 3,970 rounds of .50 calibre ammo rained on the runways, revetments, buildings, gun positions, etc. By the end of the day, practically every pilot knew Campoformido as well as his own base. Total claims of 21 a/c damaged and destroyed were not regarded very hilariously since on March 18th Lt. Paff was MIA. On the 21st, Lt. Nicholas was forced to bail out but was picked up by Air Sea Rescue with a leg wound.

On the 21st of March "A" party moved to Cesenatico to receive the a/c on March 23rd. "B" party followed on the 24th. Living conditions were exceptionally good and consisted of numerous small houses and one large hotel. They were located on the finest white beach sand the Adriatic offers. With no small amount of effort the city's water pumps and mains were repaired, windows installed in our buildings, Italians hired for waiters etc. Life was far above a mere existence.

The landing strip was not appreciated as much as the living quarters. The runway was short, obstructed at both ends, and being constructed in the dunes, sand blew into engines. Thousand pound bombs were carried only when 500 pounders would not suffice, because of the difficulties of take-off.



*Our concentrated supply-dumps were symbolic of air superiority undisputed*

During April, despite 7 days poor weather, we put up 3020 sorties, passing the 3000 level for the first time in the group's operational history.

During the first 8 days we concentrated on bridge targets and Armed Recces in Yugoslavia. Although the rapid Russian advance chopped off some of the usual hunting ground, the Villach-Klagenfurt-Celje areas provided excellent train and MT targets. A total of fifteen Armed Recces on the first three days showed a total of 2 locos destroyed and 32 damaged; 78 MT destroyed and 152 damaged; 82 TRGs destroyed and 325 damaged.

The main effort for the month, however, was directed to close support for the all-out Italian attack, commencing on the 9th, when for 17 straight days the sortie level remained well over 100 per day. The superhuman efforts of the ground crews in maintaining serviceability of the P-47s was especially illustrated from the 16th to the 20th, when for five consecutive days the daily sortie level averaged over 160.

Exactly 300 close support missions were flown from the afternoon of the 9th until the 26th. Results were exceptional and numerous congratulatory messages flowed in both for the group as a whole and for individual flights.

Bad weather and lack of targets as our Armies



Cesenatico L. Gr. was fashioned out of sand dunes —







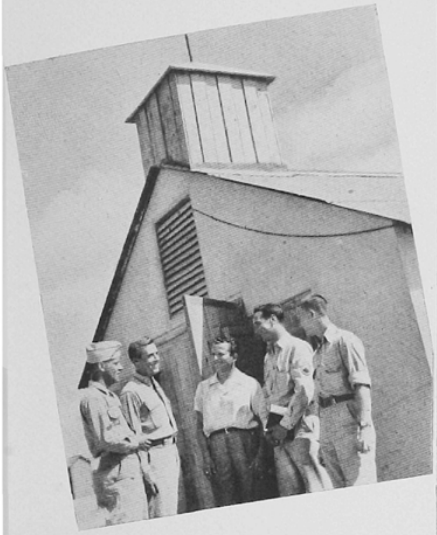


but living conditions —



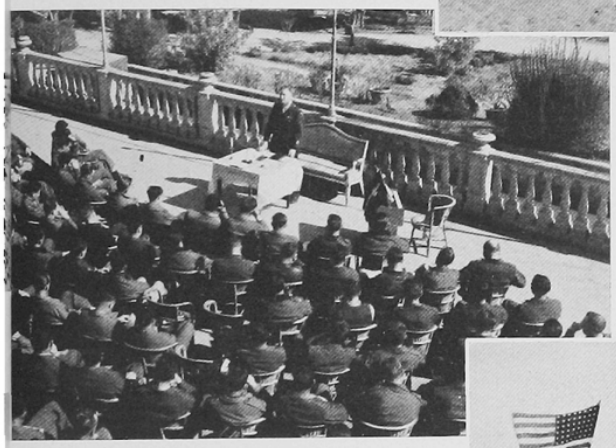
bordered on the de luxe, as well as the Adriatic

We were proud of our
Chapel by the Sea . . .

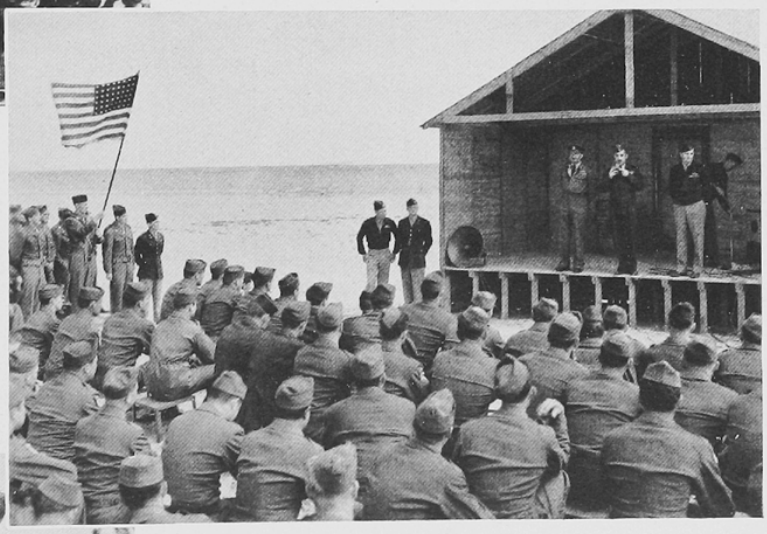




and delighted in Adriatic bathing



V-E Day Religious Service was held . . .





Air Marshall Garrod and Vice Air Marshall Foster gave farewell talks at the occasion of severing connection with D. A. F.

raced through Northern Italy resulted in practically a stand-down from the 27th to the 30th.

Enemy air action was confined to one "semi-engagement" when one of three ME 262's made a pass at 85 Sqn. in the Udine area. The "bug" did not fire, but made off North at high speed. On April 9, an ME 163 was spotted near Imola, but was out of range.

The end of April marked the end of over 2 years of operations against the Italian and German forces by the Group. It had in that time carved a place at the top of the list of comparable units, by its tactical and technical developments and operational successes.

The desire to see home before participating in the Pacific war was strong among the men. May and June were months of hope, followed by despair, then reborn hope, confusion, and a few solid facts.

May 4th was the memorable day following the finish of hostilities. Air Marshal Garrod (ACC, MAAF) and Air Vice Marshal Foster (ACC, DAF) visited us to deliver farewell talks, as our connection with DAF was being officially severed. In their honor, we gave our first overseas parade which was remarkably good considering the length of time elapsed since men had attempted a "spit'n polish" review.



*The long strife was over*

May 8th was officially proclaimed V-E Day in the theater. It was rather an anti-climax since as it was an accepted fact the war was over here several days previous. Consequently festivities were few and all minds were wondering what would happen next.

Several days after V-E Day, Col. Pinkston received orders to return immediately to the USA for a special assignment. Lt. Col. John F. Martin, who had been among the original pilots to come overseas with the Group, assumed command at this time.

The hopes of the men hit an all time high when Col. Pinkston, in all good faith, announced in his farewell talk to the men, that the group was going home as a unit. With this happy outlook for the future, one and all entered into the "Information and Education" program which had gone smoothly into operations after V-E Day.

This program took place in the afternoons and evenings, because mornings were taken up with duties and flight training. The program consisted of a school almost completely staffed with instructors from the Group, with exception of a Swiss language professor. Courses of both high school and college level were offered and credit could be obtained. Two evenings a week, orientation lectures were given on phases of the war, unit participation, the redeployment program. (The average number of points for each man in the Group was around 120.) Movies were shown and everyone was immediately subjected to the compulsory film "Two Down and One To Go". For those not interested in school, athletic programs were carried out on the beach and full advantage was taken of the Adriatic's cooling qualities. All personnel participated in Physical Training at 1615 hours each day. To satisy the competitive desires of all, a softball league was in full swing. Teams were organized on the basis of one from the enlisted personnel of each squadron and Hq., and one from the Officers of the organization.

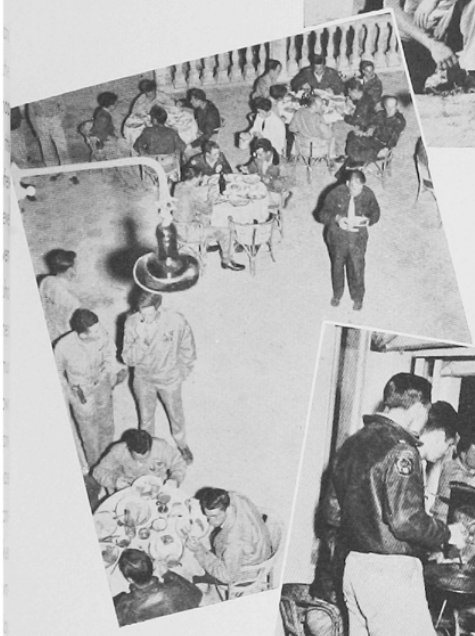
The latter part of May brought shocking news. We were not going home as a unit but to compensate somewhat, we were going to Austria as part of the occupational forces instead of directly into combat again.

Throughout June, confusion was the rule but by the end of the month it was fairly well established that a good share of the older personnel would be replaced unless they were classed as essential or volunteered to remain. Peacetime modes of army life were creeping into the day's routine. The fact that there was no longer a war was slowly being realized by men who had spent months wondering if it would ever end.

June 29th was a historic day for the older members of the 79th. Orders arrived transferring all but a very few essential men to organizations that would return



*The Officers developed a fast Ball Club*

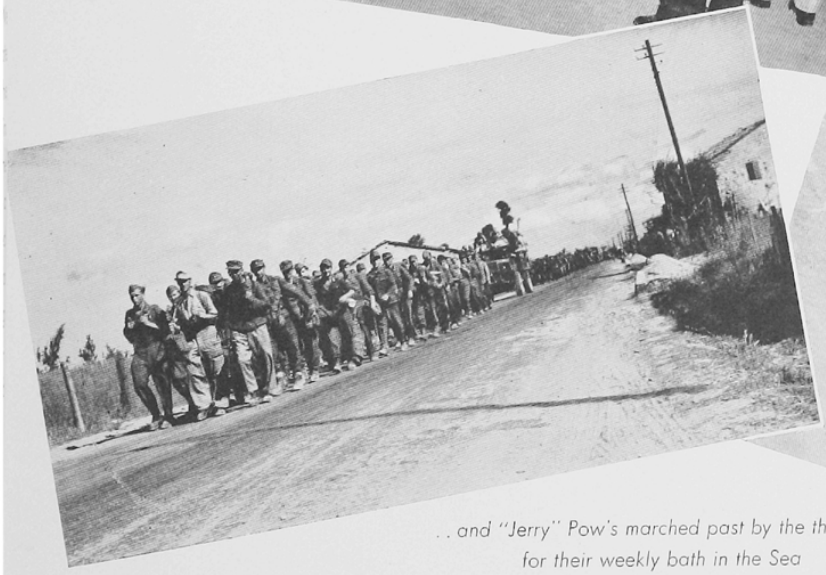


*"The lights went on again"*



*Party nights were frequent*







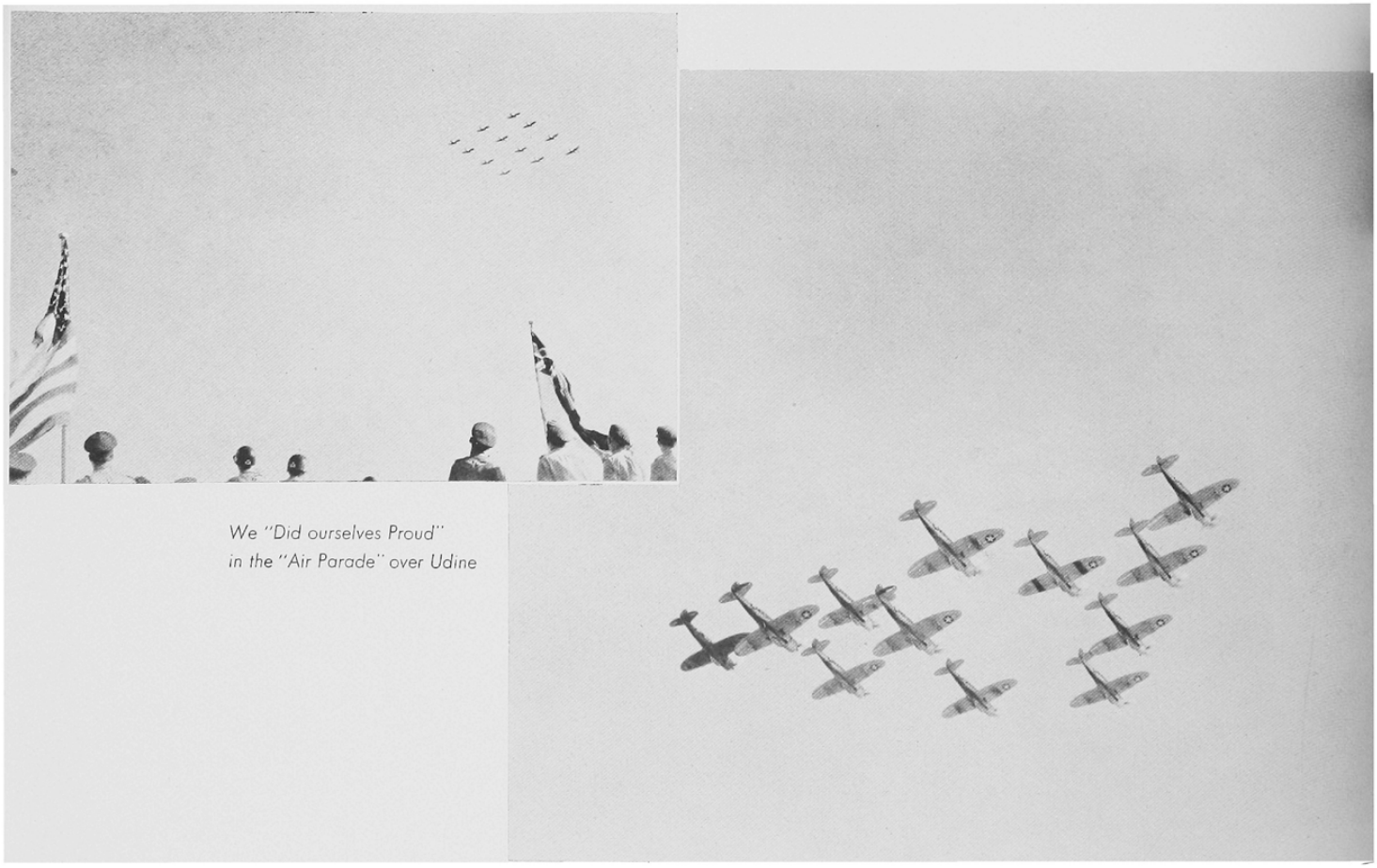
*. . and "Jerry" Pow's marched past by the thousands for their weekly bath in the Sea*



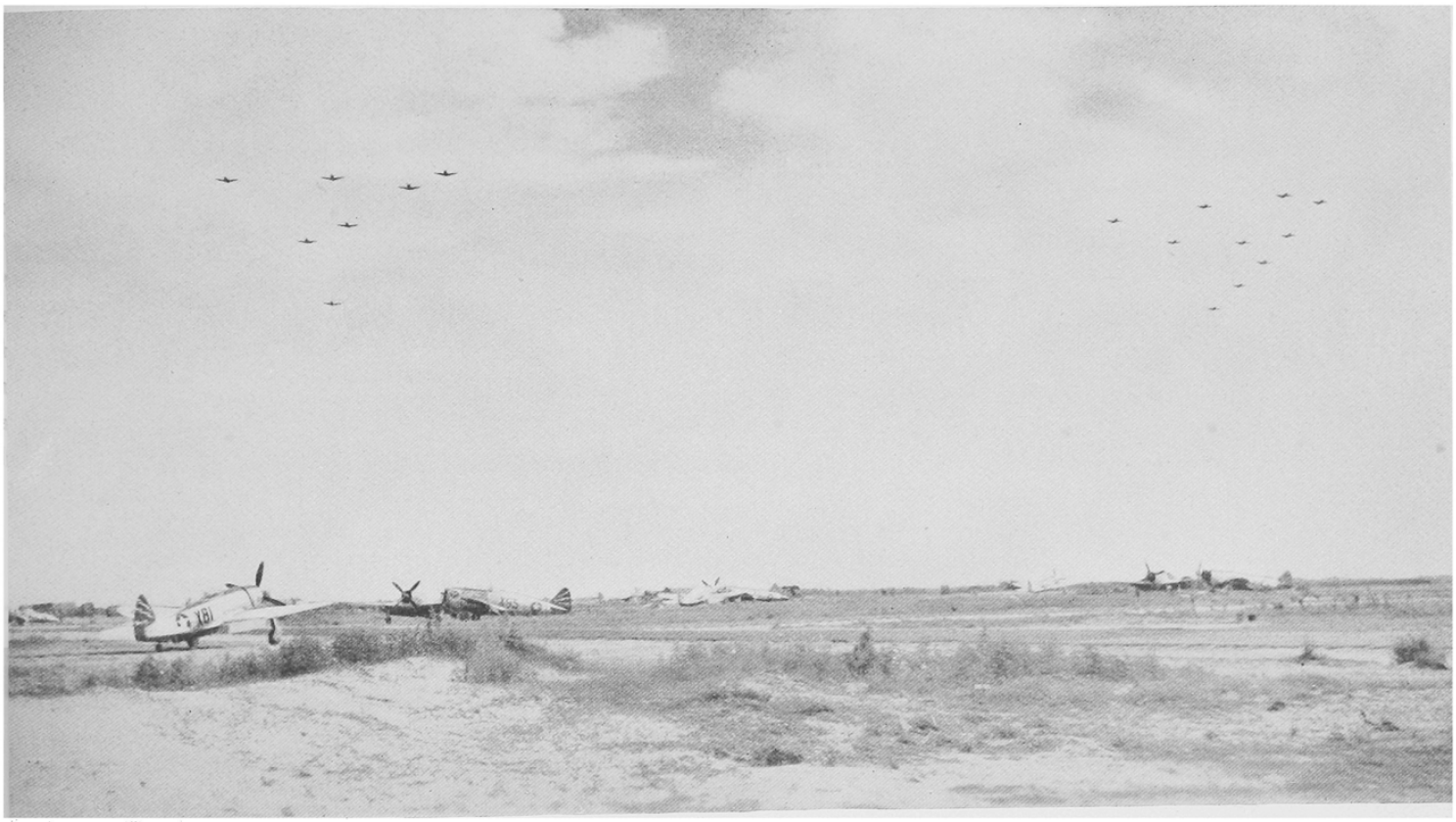
*. . . from their sprawling tent compounds nearby*

to the USA. The end of 33 months of hard labor, and close association had finally come, with the usual emotional reactions. Everyone happy to be going home but getting twinges of sentimentality at the thought of separation from the old outfit and friends of such long duration.

Because of the long period of operations under British control and isolation from American jurisdiction and units, the 79th developed a rather refreshing personality that, we understand from visitors, was unique. A visiting Colonel once told the Group C. O. "You have no ordinary men in your command—just a collection of characters". With the resumption of peace time operations and influx of new personnel in large numbers the situation will possibly revert to "normal", but the many performances that made that statement true will live as a vivid memory to the personnel that comprised the 79th Fighter Group.



*We "Did ourselves Proud"*
*in the "Air Parade" over Udine*



*The Fighting 79th had written its name indelibly in the sky*

# CAMPAIGNS



| | |
|---|---|
| ★ **EGYPT—LIBYA** | 11 June 1942 to 12 February 1943 |
| ★ **TUNISIA** | (Air) 8 Nov. '42, (Ground) 17 Nov. '42, to 13 May 1943 |
| ★ **SICILY** | (Air) 14 May '43, (Ground) 9 July '43, to 17 August '43 |
| ★ **NAPLES—FOGGIA** | 9 September 1943 to 21 January 1944 |
| ★ **ROME—ARNO** | 22 January 1944 to 9 September 1944 |
| ★ **SOUTHERN FRANCE** | 15 August 1944 to 14 September 1944 |
| ★ **GERMANY** | 15 September 1944 to 1 October 1944 |
| ★ **AIR COMBAT - BALKANS** | 1 November 1944 to 31 December 1944 |
| ★ **NORTH APPENNINES** | 10 September 1944 to 4 April 1945 |
| ★ **PO VALLEY** | 5 April 1945 to 8 May 1945 |

# BATTLE CITATION



Extract from General Orders No. 23, War Department, Washington, D.C., 24 March 1944:

". . . citation of the following unit . . . is confirmed . . . in the name of the President of the United States as public evidence of deserved honor and distinction. The citation reads as follows:

For outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy in direct support of the British Eighth Army in the Middle East theater in the North African campaign from March 1943 to the capitulation of the enemy forces in Tunisia and in Sicily. Entering the campaign as the ground forces were advancing across the North African desert and were in great need of effective air support, this unit, though lacking in experience at that time, immediately and continuously rendered tactical air support of our allied army, directly contributing to the success of the advance. Through the bravery, skill and efficiency of its pilots, and the initiative, ingenuity, untiring efforts, and devotion to duty of its ground personnel, despite personal hardships and difficult desert conditions, the 79th FIGHTER GROUP (S) advanced with the front lines of the British Eighth Army, operating continuously under all types of weather conditions to carry out fighter patrols, to dive and strafe enemy troops, positions, and supplies, to engage and destroy enemy aircraft, and to provide fighter escort for our own and allied bombardment airplanes and ship convoys. By the skillful, courageous, efficient, and carefully coordinated efforts and performance of duty in action against the enemy, this organization, throughout its participation in the North African campaign, rendered an invaluable contribution vital to the success of our forces and in keeping with the finest traditions of our armed forces."

# --WITH OAK LEAF CLUSTER



HEADQUARTERS TWELFTH AIR FORCE
APO 650

GENERAL ORDERS)
NUMBER 165)

23 July 1945

CITATION OF UNIT

Under the provisions of Circular 333, War Department, 1943 and Circular 73, MTOUSA, 12 May 1945, the 79th Fighter Group is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations on 6 March 1945. During the months of February and March 1945, the Germany Army made desperate attempts to withdraw troops and equipment from Yugoslavia in order to utilize them against the Russian drive through Austria. Taking full advantage of characteristically poor weather, darkness and a terrain which made effective fighter-bomber attacks extremely hazardous, he would have succeeded were it not for the unceasing, resolute attacks made by the 79th Fighter Group, which, as the sole American fighter-bomber Group operating in this area, displayed so outstanding a unit courage and determination that the enemy attempts to withdraw were frustrated. This battle reached its climax on 6 March 1945. Despite extremely adverse weather and with full knowledge of exceptionally strong anti-aircraft defenses which had destroyed eight of their aircraft and damaged 22 others in the preceding fifteen days, the pilots of the 79th Fighter Group, in complete defiance of the hazards involved, returned again and again in attack against vital communi-cations-routes and targets, taking off from runways 1500 feet short of the safety margin for bomb-laden P-47's and flying through treacherous mountain terrain heavily obscured by overcast. Undeterred by swiftly changing weather and intense anti-aircraft fire from batteries accurately trained on them from mountain positions higher than their attacking altitude, the gallant pilots of the 79th Fighter Group bombed, strafed and rocketted rail and motor vehicles with devastating effect, disabling 28 locomotives, destroying or damaging more than 300 railroad cars, 50 motor vehicles and five barges, and knocking out two bridges. The extraordinary heroism, determination and consummate skill of both ground and air crews of the 79th Fighter Group on this day, during which they flew 114 sorties despite the loss of one and heavy damage to two other aircraft, disrupted the enemy's plan for bringing pressure against the advancing Russian forces and climaxed an outstanding period of attack and interdiction of the Yugoslav battle area, thereby reflecting highest credit upon them-selves and the Armed Forces of the United States.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL MYERS:

OFFICIAL:

JOHN W. SESSUMS, Jr.
Colonel, GSC
Chief of Staff

L. D. CUMMINGS
Lt. Col., ADC,
Adjutant General

# COMMENDATIONS

FROM: Adv. Air HQ WD

Message from General Montgomery, results of operations 26 March 43.

"It is unnecessary for me to say how proud I am of the magnificient effort which was made by all units on that operation. There is no doubt it was a major contribution to the path of the Eighth Army in their attack on the Mareth positions and I would like commanders to convoy to all their pilots my appreciation of their effort to the land battle that has been given by the Air Forces yesterday, and in fact every day since this battle started. Such intimate and close support has not been to my knowledge achieved before and it has been an inspiration to all troops. The results have been first class. I sincerely trust you have not suffered many losses. Please convoy to all commanders and all the pilots the grateful thanks of myself and the whole army for their truly magnificent effort".

TO: Crew Chiefs and Ground Crews. May 11, 1943. Western Desert,

A Fighter Pilot's success begins with his ground crew. As you already know, your high standard of work is just as vital as that of the combat pilot.

Your pilots have flown in the Tunisian Campaign nearly 4000 combat sorties without a single forced landing except those caused by enemy action. This remarkable performance of yours is extremely close to a record, if not the record, and I am told you are approaching 100 hours of flight per engine, a figure which is twice above a service average for combat engines in the Desert.

You have my personal admiration, and your country owes you a debt of gratitude.

I shall report with pleasure to General Arnold that you are keeping your standards high, and I am trusting in you to continue the high quality of conscientious effort, and I am hoping now you may finish the war with an absolutely clean slate, showing no forced landing due to any engine failure.

I enjoyed my short visit with the 79th very much, you have a fine crowd in every way. (signed) EDDIE RICKENBACKER.

FROM ADV HQ NINTH AF. May 13, 1943.

"Immensely proud of 9th Air Force performance of the Airmen of America under your leadership and grateful over the prestige which these airmen bring the UNITED STATES ARMY. Well done again". (This message to CG 9 USAF from Gen. Marshall).

FROM: Adv. Air HQ WD. to 79th Ftr. Gp. 30/4/43.

"Please convoy to all units under your Command my heartiest congratulations on your magnificent bombing today. Such efforts will do much toward hastening the end of the German in Tunisia". (Above from A. O. C., regarding destroyer sunk by 79th).

ADVANCED HEADQUARTERS NINTH U. S. AIR FORCE

COMMENDATION

TO Officers and men, 79th Fighter Group. May 18, 1943

1. The battle of Africa is now history. The part that you men have played in bringing this combat to a successful conclusion is recorded in the annals of our War Department.

2. You have lived up to the highest traditions of the American Army. By your whole-hearted, enthusiastic and concentrated efforts, your unit was enabled to play its part so brilliantly. The morale and esprit d'corps, that you have always exhibited, is a great source of pride to every one who came in contact with you.

3. From the bottom of my heart I wish to congratulate each and every one of you for the great show that you have put up. With the work that you have done so well, we can look forward with hopw and confidence to any future action that fate holds in store for us.

4. Again, my warmest personal congratulations, and expressing my great appreciation in being so intimately connected with you, and wishing you the best of luck in your future operations, I am

Most Sincerely and Admiringly yours,

A. C. STRICKLAND,

Brig. Gen., U. S. A., Commanding

ADVANCED HEADQUARTERS DESERT AIR FORCE

My Dear Bates, 27th September 1943

Attached are copies of correspondence between General Alexander, commanding 15th Army Group, and General Spaatz, Commanding N. W. A. A. F., in which they praise the recent operations at Salerno.

Air Marshal Coningham wishes me to add his congratulations for the work which you have done and I would like you to accept mine, and at the same time to assure you how proud I am of the work you did, particularly the efficient way in which you carried out rapid moves into Italy under very arduous conditions, and recommenced operations with amazing alacrity and efficiency.

79th Fighter Group, U. S. A. A. C.
DESERT AIR FORCE

Yours Sincerely, (signed) HARRY BROADHURST
Air Vice Marshal, Commanding.

TO: Commanding Officer, 79th Fighter Group 10 October 1943

The 86th and 87th Fighter Squadrons accomplished a most successful low level bombing and strafing attack on enemy M.T. in the battle area near TERMOLI in the afternoon of October 5th 1943. The attack was pressed home in the face of intense ground fire. As a result of the attack at least 55 M.T. were destroyed or damaged. It was a day of air effort which received a message of congratulation and thanks from the Corps H.Q. operating near TERMOLI. This message stated that such missions had been largely instrumental in halting the heavy counter attack which the enemy was mounting NW. of TERMOLI.

s/T.G. Pike G/Capt.
No. 1 M.O.R.U.
ROYAL AIR FORCE

Wire from Adv. Hq., D.A.F., to C.O., 79th Ftr. Gp., 3 Nov. 1943

"Commanding Officer of the 5th Corps, operating on this front, has passed his thanks and congratulations to me for your efforts against enemy ground troops and gun concentrations during past two days."

Air Officer Commanding
DESERT AIR FORCE

Wire from Adv. Hq. D.A.F. to C.O. 79th. Ftr. Gp., 30. Nov. 1943

"Commanding Officer, 8th Indian Div. expresses his appreciation for the air support given on that command's front during past four days." (Nov. 26.—30.)

Message from British 8th Army, 1800 Hours, 8 Dec. 1943

"Skillful and accurate bombing by Warhawks against Orsogna has been greatly appreciated by all Forward Troops of New Zealand Division."

TO : 79th Ftr. Gp. (and other D. A. F. units)
From: Adv. Hq. D. A. F. March 1945

Full photo cover has now been received of the attack against Venice Harbour installations on March 21. The results achieved are excellent, and the maximum amount of military damage has been done by a comparatively small force. Bombing was most accurate and no apparent damage has been done to any of the cultural monuments which were in close proximity to the target. The anti-flak attacks were well timed and accurately delivered. Thanks to this and the efficiency of the Air/Sea Rescue measure, we did not lose a single pilot. My best congratulations to all who took part in this neatly executed operation.

Air Officer Commanding
DESERT AIR FORCE

TO: Commanding Officer, 85th Squadron, 79th Fighter Group. From: Forward Troops. 13 April 1945

"Very many thanks for your bombing at 1330 hours today. It was damned good and helped us a lot. Thank you."

From: 2 New Zealand Division Ref: Fighter Bomber support 16 April 1945

Ground reports confirm the following destroyed: 2 Panther tanks; 1 88 mm gun; 1 S/Propelled gun; 3 Field guns; 1 Heavy gun; 2 Mark IV tanks; 12 Motor Transport. Congratulations to you and many thanks.

From: Forward Troops. TO: 79th Ftr. Gp. 16 April 1945

Ground troops confirm DICKIE Leader attack anti-tank defences at 1930 hrs. most effective and accurate. (By Lts. Lancing, Woodbury, Klassie, and Miller, 85th Sqadron)

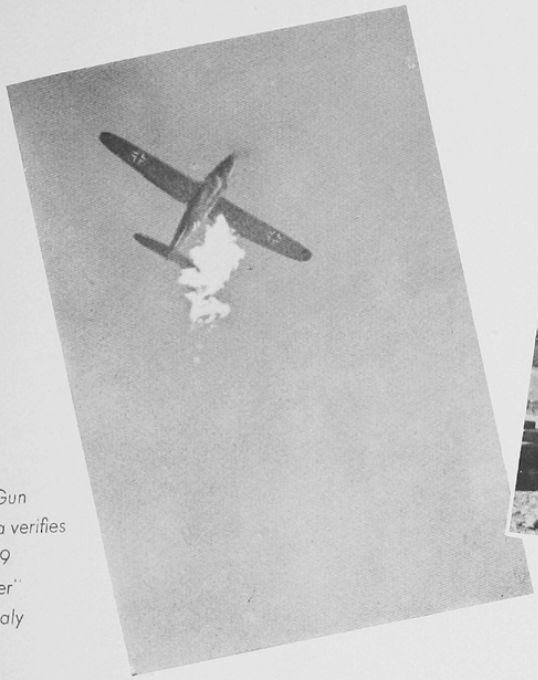
# Claims



The following short statistical summary will give the reader a factual insight into the activities of the 79th Fighter Group during the European War. It's not a pretty picture, but such figures are the only barometer for victory, or defeat, in war.

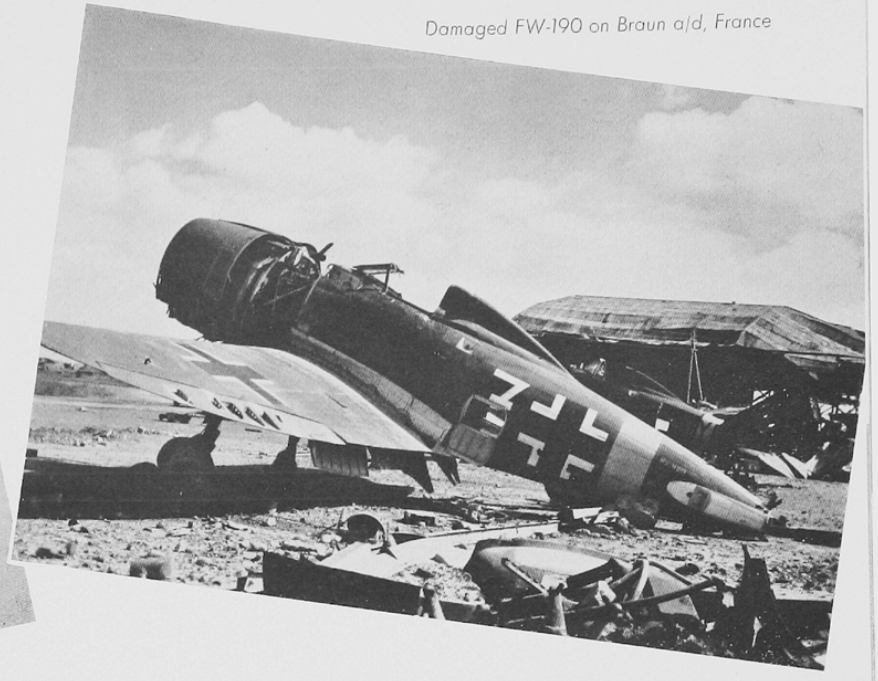
Included herein are the operations of the 315th and 316th Fighter Squadrons while training with the group during April and May of 1943. Also included is the 99th Fighter Squadron (First Negro Squadron Overseas) which was attached to the 79th from October 1943 to March 1944.

In evaluating the damage inflicted on the enemy, only the more important targets and results have been listed. It should be remembered these claims are based on observations made at the time the damage was inflicted. Experience in this organization has shown that such observations are usually on the conservative side.



79th Gun camera verifies ME-109 "Flamer" over Italy

Damaged FW-190 on Braun a/d, France



## Total Victories over Enemy Aircraft

| | |
|---|---|
| Destroyed . . . . . | 197 |
| Probably destroyed | 56 |
| Damaged . . . . . | 217 |
| Total | 470 |

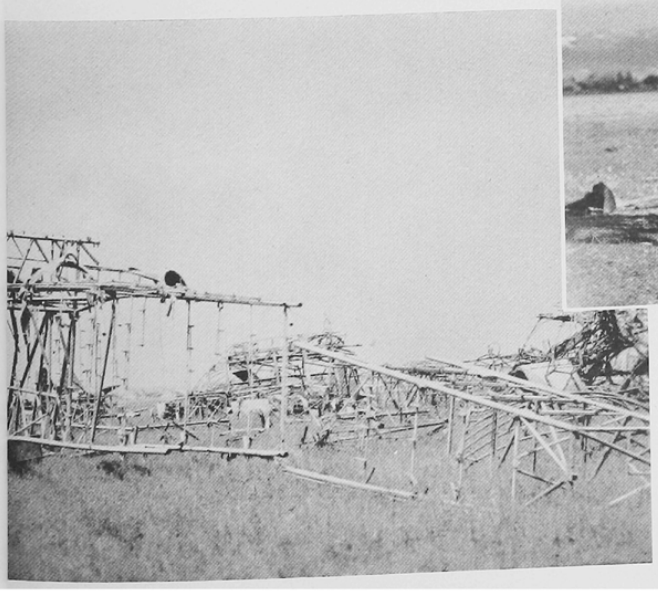


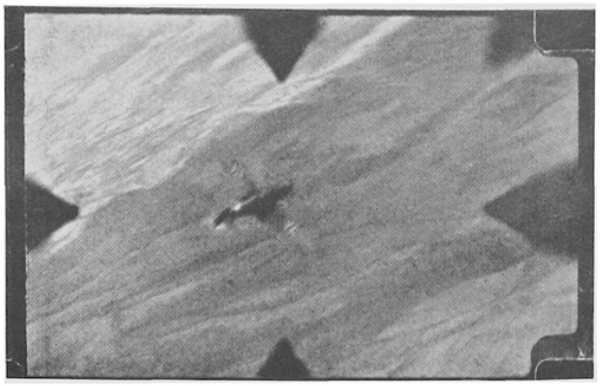
Stuka "kaput" — Italy



"Plucked" Storch, Valence, France

Air-Frame Wreckage, Italy





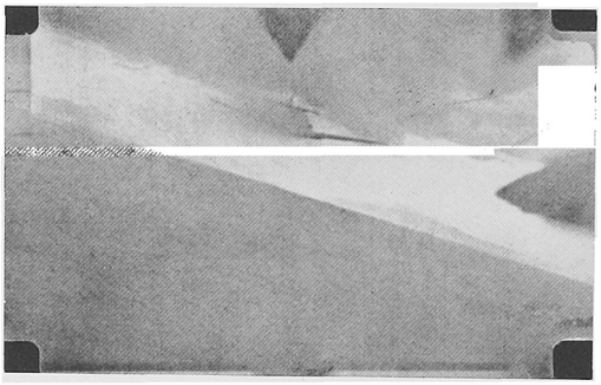
*Falcon spots Focke-Wulf*

## Victories

IN THE AIR

BY TYPES:

| Type A/C | Destroyed | Probably Destroyed | Damaged | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FW-190 . . . | 53 | 6 | 22 | 81 |
| ME-109 . | 70 | 19 | 42 | 131 |
| MA-202 . . | 12 | | 3 | 15 |
| Ju-88 . . . . . | 2 | | | 2 |
| Fiesler Storch | 1 | | | 1 |
| Total | 138 | 25 | 67 | 230 |



*Gets in a burst*

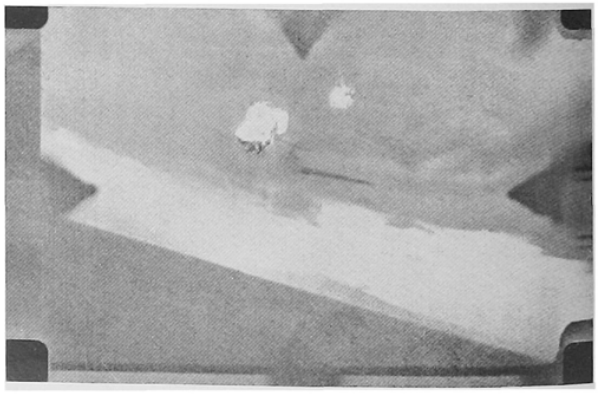
## Victories

IN THE AIR

BY SQUADRONS:

| Squadron | Destroyed | Probably Destroyed | Damaged | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 85th | 36 | 10 | 22 | 68 |
| 86th | 33 | 5 | 17 | 55 |
| 87th | 52 | 8 | 24 | 84 |
| 316th | 1 | | | 1 |
| 99th | 16 | 2 | 4 | 22 |
| Total | 138 | 25 | 67 | 230 |

*One destroyed*



## *Aircraft destroyed or damaged on the ground:*

| TYPE A/C | DESTROYED | PROBABLY DESTROYED | DAMAGED | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CR-42 . . . . | 1 | 4 | 14 | 19 |
| DO-217 . . . | 2 | | | 2 |
| FW-190 . . | | | 2 | 2 |
| Gliders . . . | 6 | | 1 | 7 |
| HE-111 . . . | 5 | 2 | 9 | 16 |
| JU-52 . . . . | 3 | 2 | 19 | 24 |
| JU-87 . . . . | 2 | | 2 | 4 |
| JU-88 . . . | 17 | 14 | 25 | 56 |
| MA-202 . . . | 3 | 1 | 5 | 9 |
| ME-109 . . . | 5 | 2 | 24 | 31 |
| ME-110 . . . | | 1 | | 1 |
| ME-323 . . . | 1 | | | 1 |
| ME-410 . . . | 2 | 1 | | 3 |
| SM-79 . . . . | 2 | 4 | 16 | 22 |
| SM-84 . . . . | 1 | | | 1 |
| Unidentified | 9 | | 33 | 42 |
| Total . . . . | 59 | 31 | 150 | 240 |

*Viterbo Airdrome after fall of Rome*



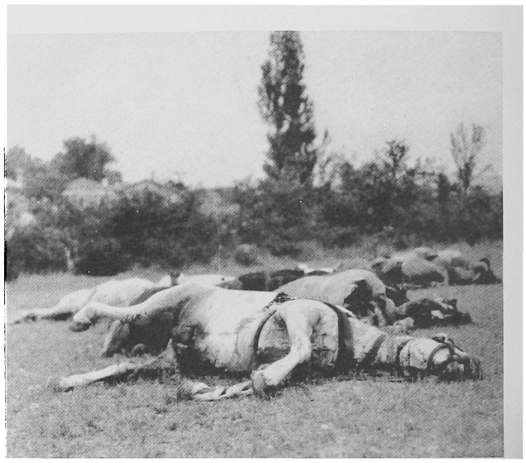
## Damage to Highway Transportation System

| | Destroyed | Damaged | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Motor Transport . . . . . | 2,290 | 2,541 | 4,831 |
| Horse Drawn Vehicles . . | 243 | 165 | 408 |
| Horses & Mules. . . . . | 712 | | 712 |
| Highway Bridges . . . . . | 52 | 106 | 158 |
| Roads . . . . . | | 562 | 562 |

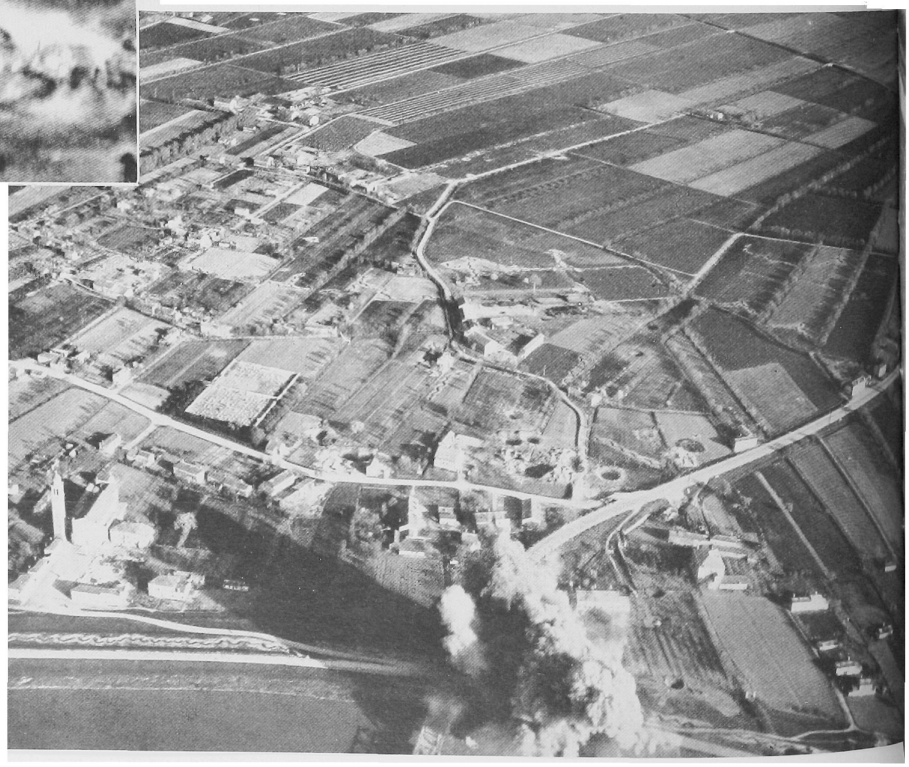




Above: Low strafing pass on truck-convoy in Yougoslavia, 1945
Below: Close-up view



Wehrmacht retreated with horse-drawn vehicles at Montelimar



Dive-bombing a Po Valley road bridge (note trenches along the river-bank)

# Damage to Railroad Transportation System

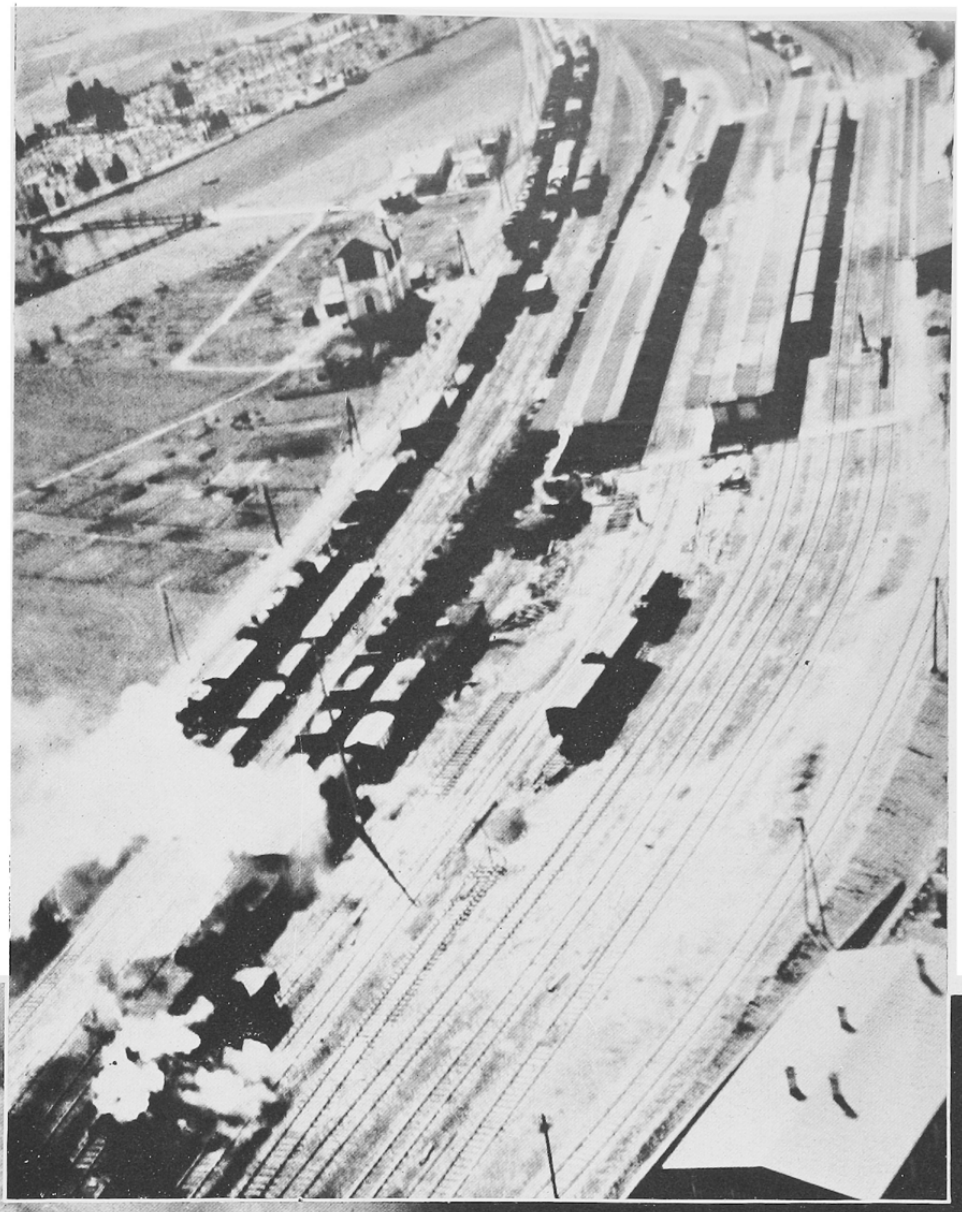
| | Destroyed | Damaged | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Locomotives . . | 171 | 327 | 498 |
| Railroad Cars . . | 1,452 | 4,236 | 5,688 |
| Railroad Bridges | 69 | 156 | 225 |
| Railroad Lines . | 1,292 | | 1,292 |

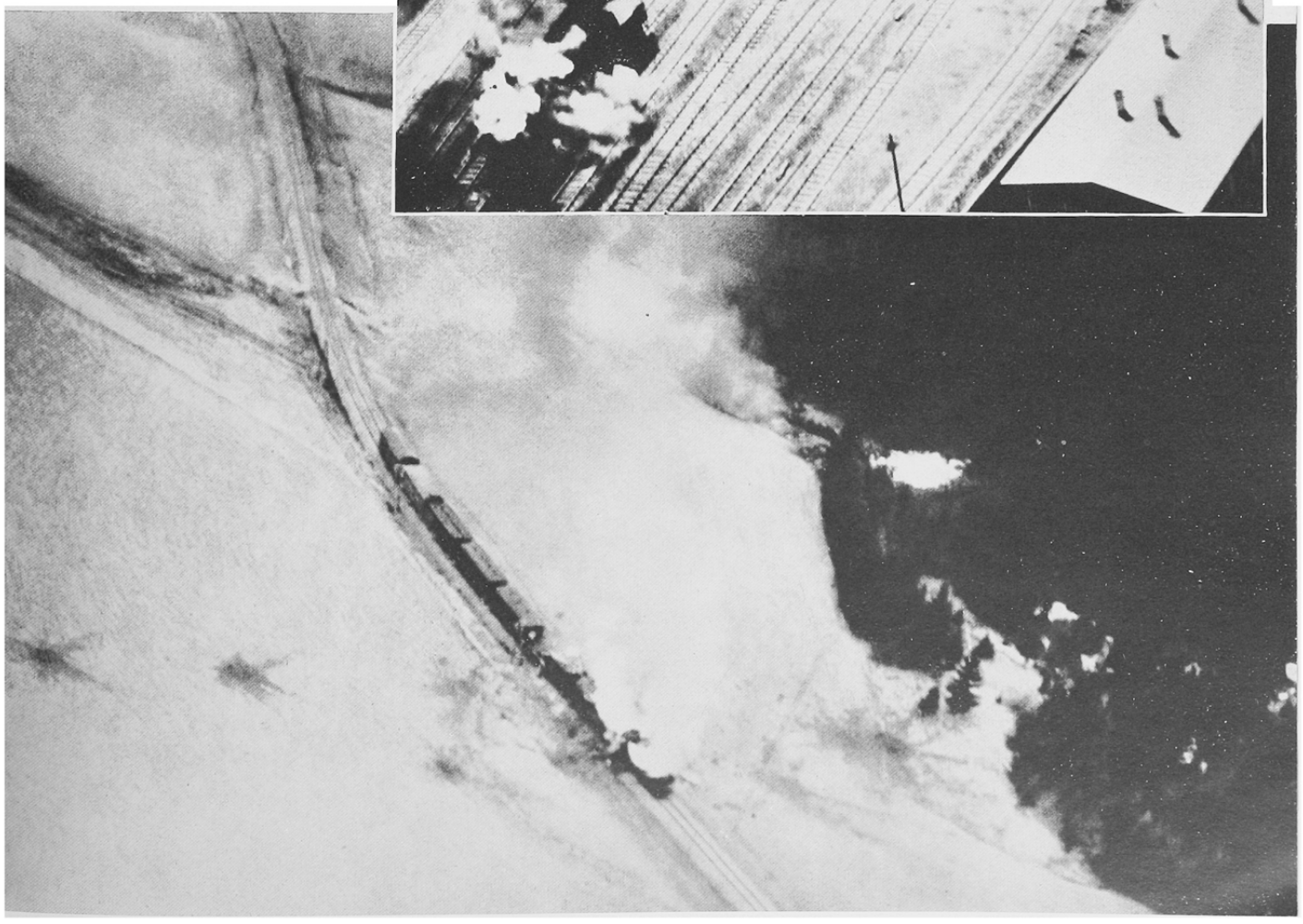
## Locomotives

**Destroyed . . 171**

**Damaged . . . 327**

**Total . . . . . 498**

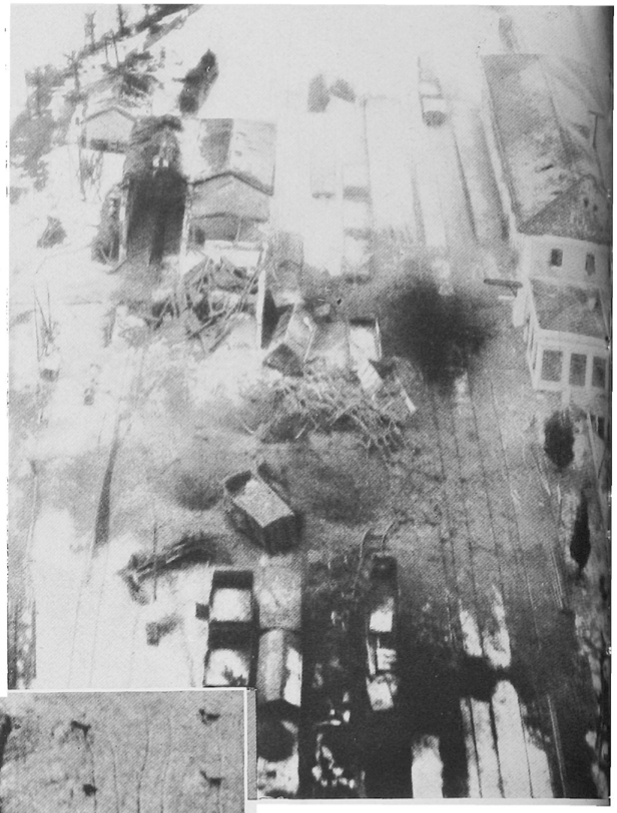


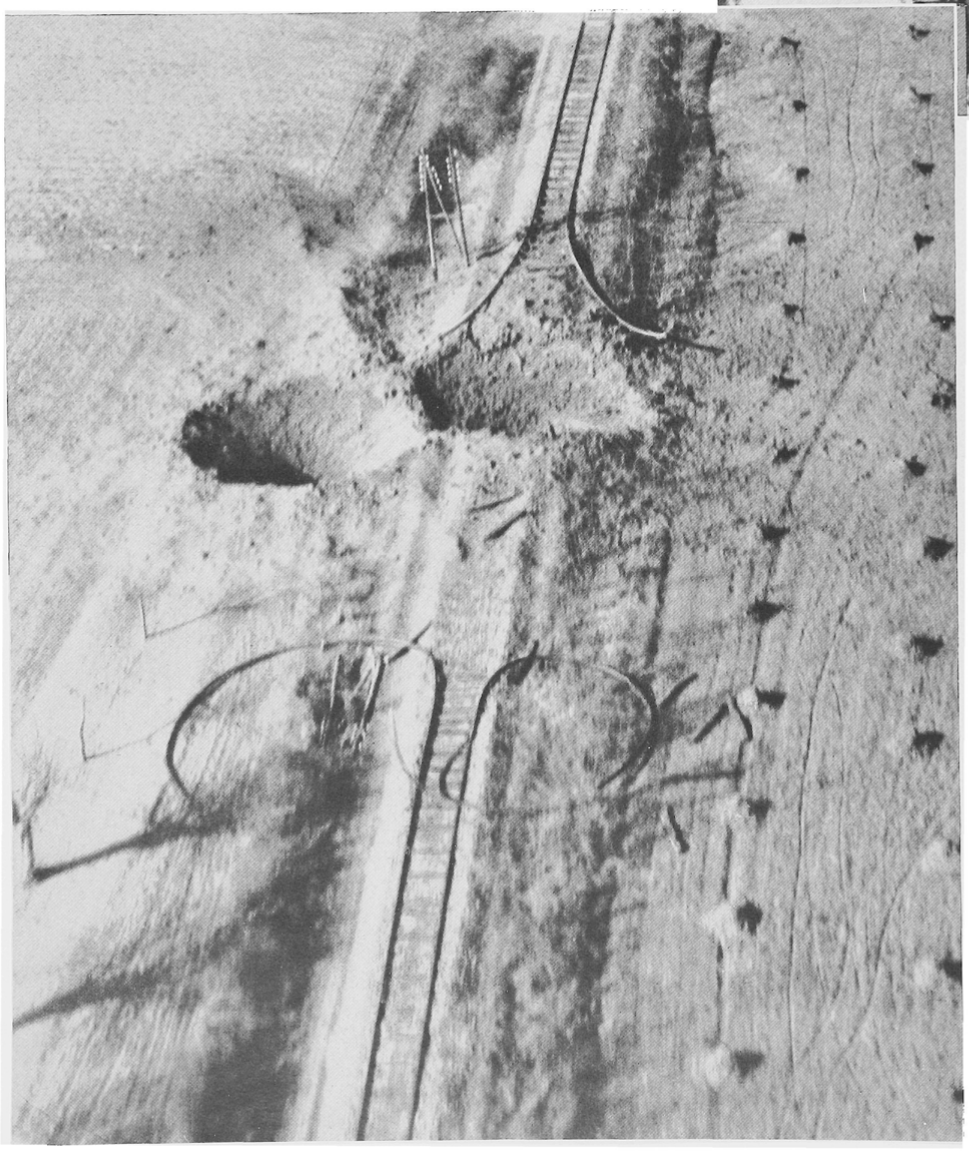


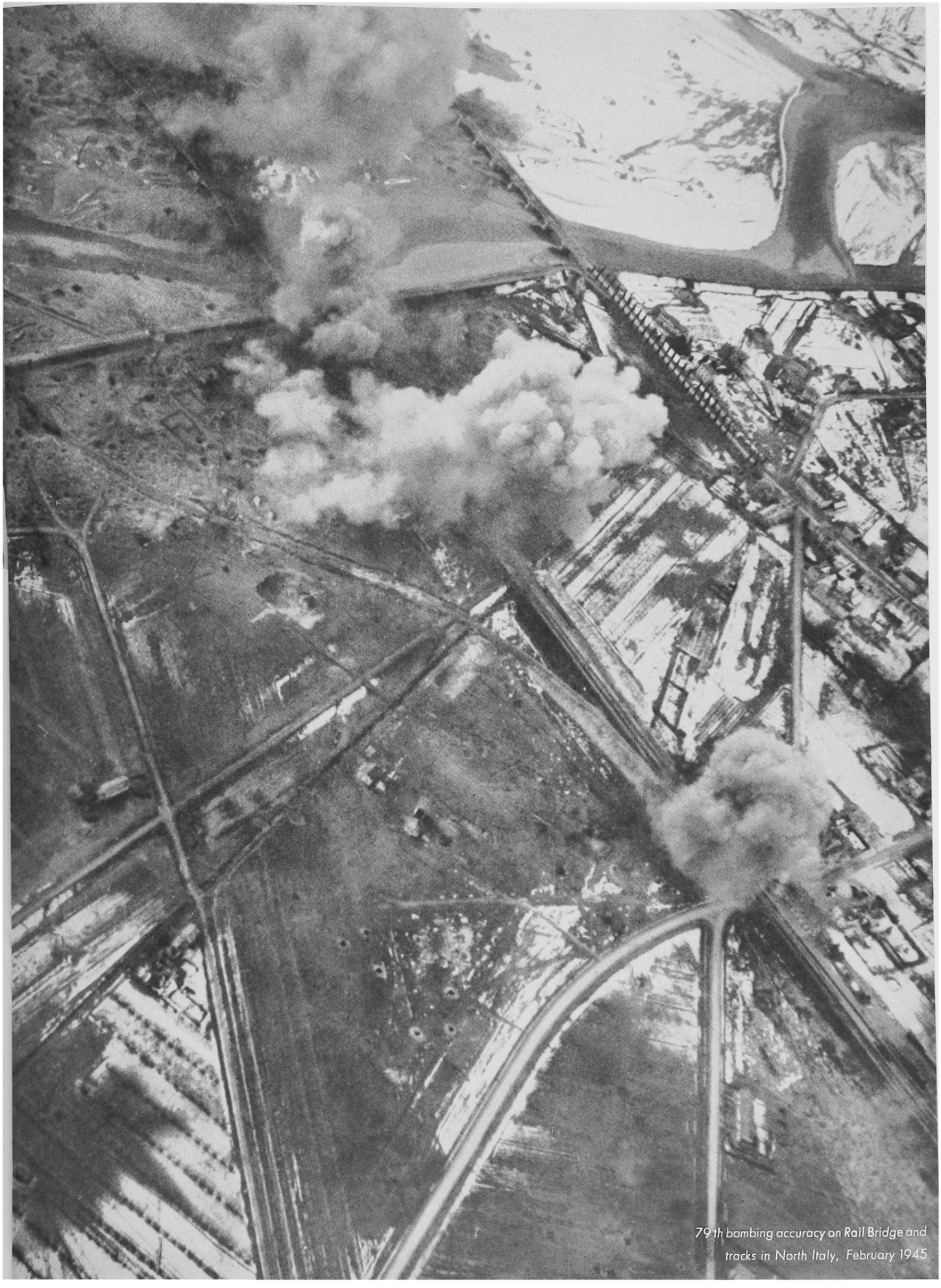
## *Rail Cars:*

| | |
|---|---|
| Destroyed . . . | 1452 |
| Damaged . . . | 4236 |
| Total . . . . . | 5688 |

## *Rail-Line cuts:* 1292



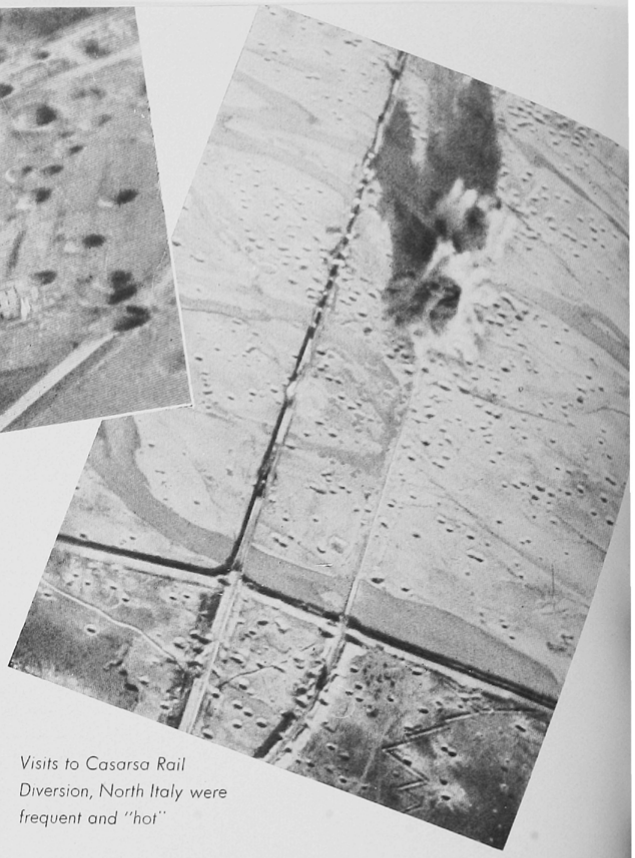




79th bombing accuracy on Rail Bridge and tracks in North Italy, February 1945



*Destroyed Twin-bridges, Po Valley, Spring, '45*



*Visits to Casarsa Rail Diversion, North Italy were frequent and "hot"*



*Most Bridge-Sites in Italy resembled the moon*

**Railroad Bridges:**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Destroyed** | **69** |
| **Damaged** | **156** |
| **Total** | **225** |



*"D.H." on rail bridge, North Italy (parallel road bridge previously destroyed)*

## Damage to Ground Installations

| | Destroyed | Damaged | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tanks | 23 | 30 | 53 |
| Mobile Guns | 56 | 5 | 61 |
| Railroad Guns | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| Armored Vehicles | 9 | 12 | 21 |
| Gun Positions | 239 | 92 | 331 |
| Buildings & Fortified Positions | 439 | 460 | 899 |
| Ammo, Supply & Fuel Dumps | 30 | 28 | 58 |
| Bivouac Areas | | 34 | 34 |



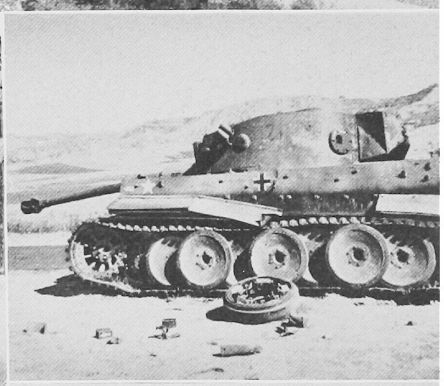
*The hole was an ammo revetment*

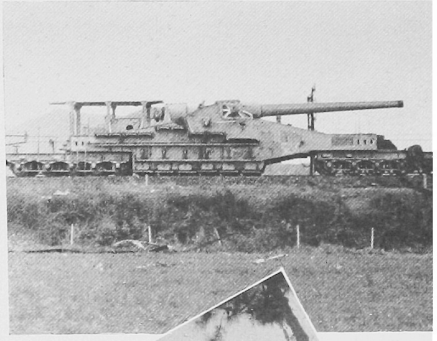






*lose-support April '45*



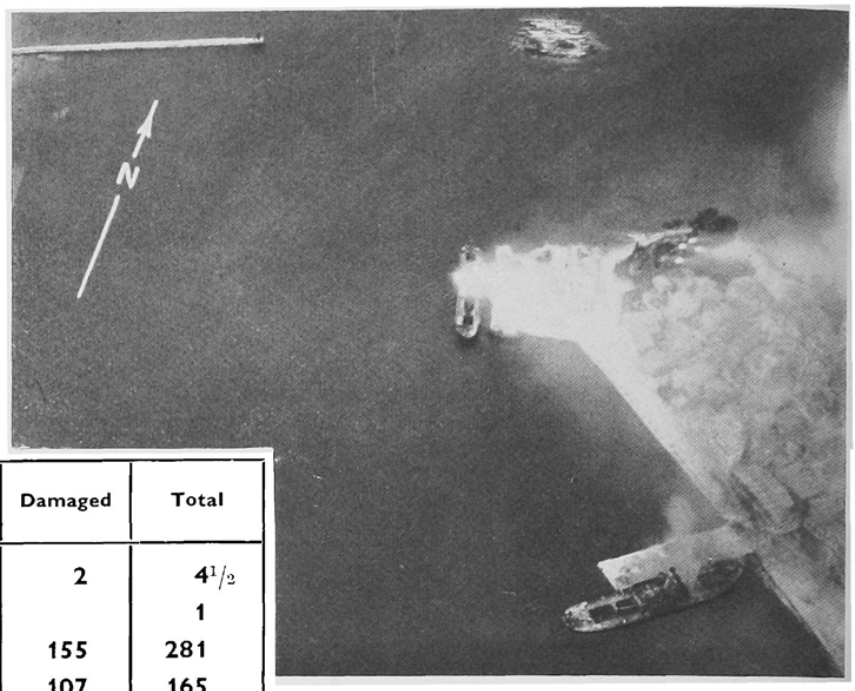




# Damage to Shipping

| | Destroyed or Sunk* | Damaged | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Destroyers . . . . | 2 1/2 | 2 | 4 1/2 |
| Aircraft Carriers | 1 | | 1 |
| Boats . . . . . | 126 | 155 | 281 |
| Barges . . . . . | 58 | 107 | 165 |

* Regret we had no facilities for Underwater Photography




*Rocketing a ship on Trieste—Fiume coast*

# Types of Mission Flown

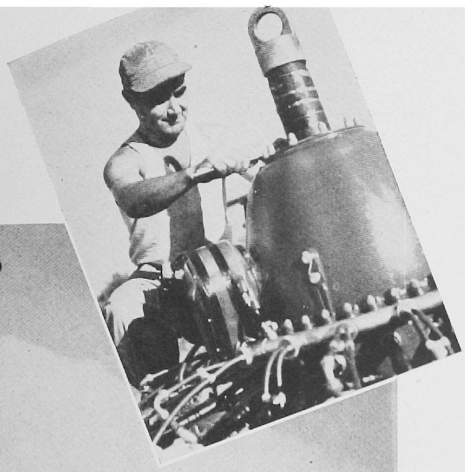
Operating 589 days out of 787 days, the group flow 4,063 missions broken down as shown below. Total number of sorties 37,006.

**37,006 sorties fired 5,263,651 rounds of Ammunition; Dropped 11,465 tons of Bombs, not including Bombs jettisoned, lost, or used for practice bombing.**

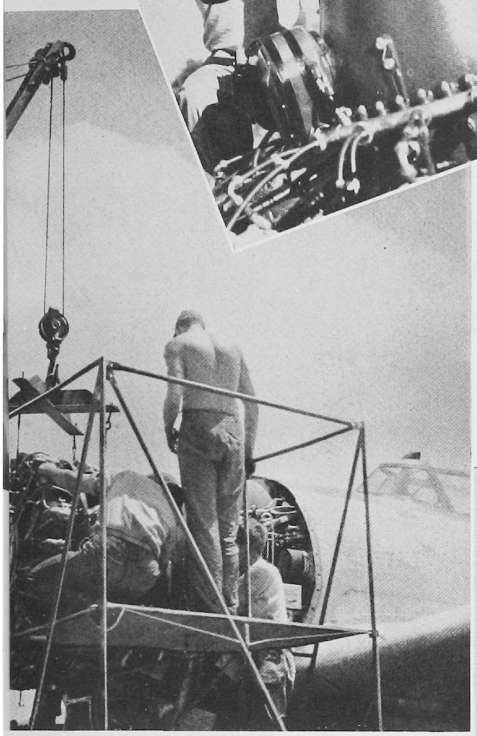
**Each sortie represented co-ordinated effort of many individuals, as partially illustrated in the following pages.**

| | |
|---|---|
| Bombing . . . . . | 2,599 |
| Strafing Without Bombs . . | 518 |
| Patrol and Fighter Sweeps . . | 349 |
| Bomber Escort . . . . . | 299 |
| Convoy and Naval Escort . . | 128 |
| Recce . . . . . | 107 |
| Air Sea Rescue Assistance . . | 27 |
| Miscellaneous . . . . . | 36 |
| Total Missions Flown . . . . . | 4,063 |

# Mission Routine



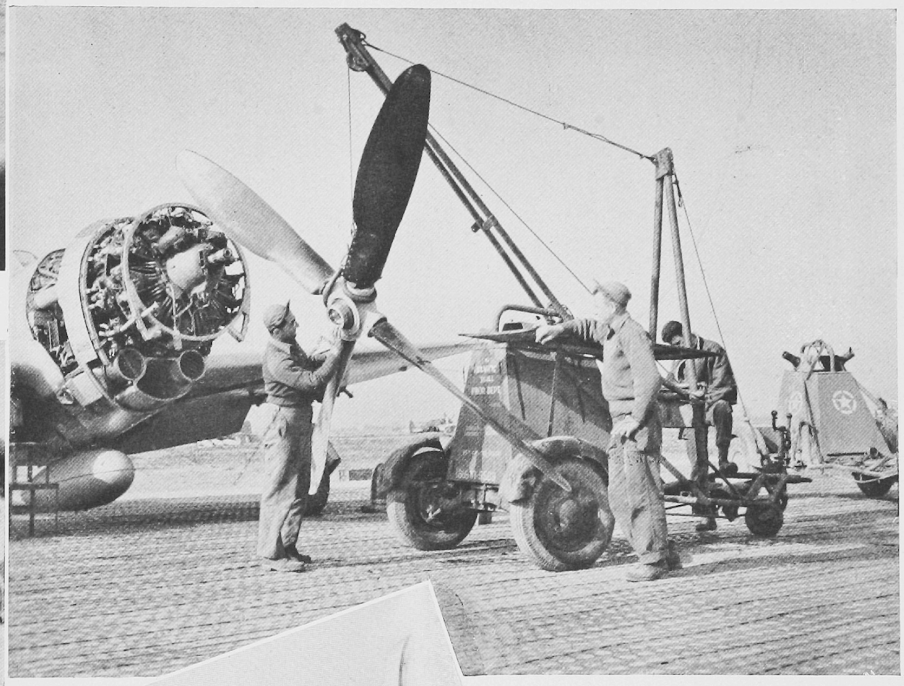
Engine-change



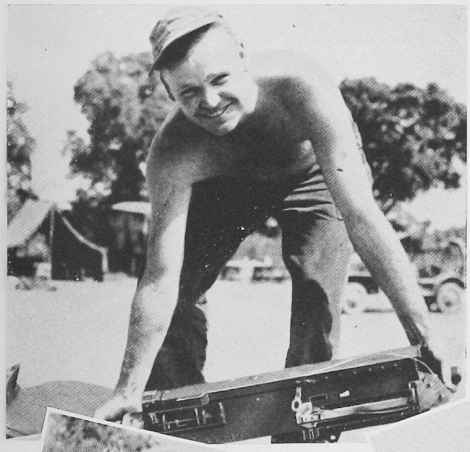


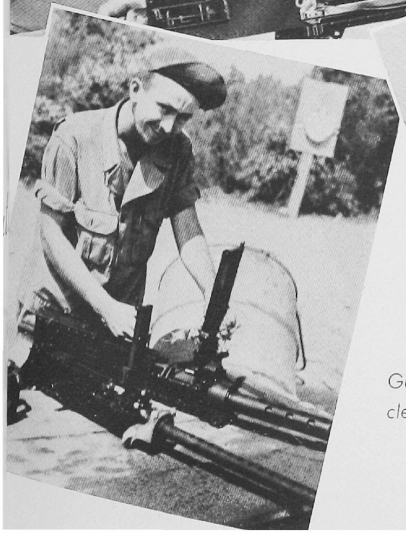
25-hour check





Prop-change



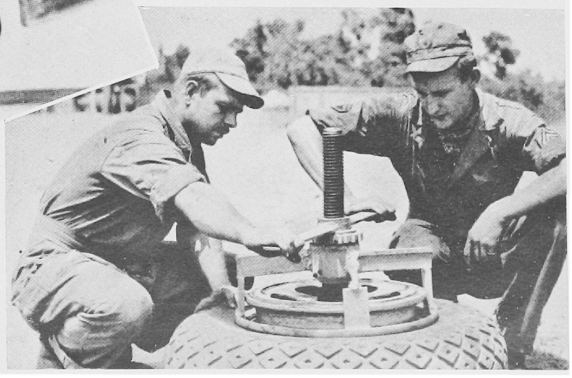


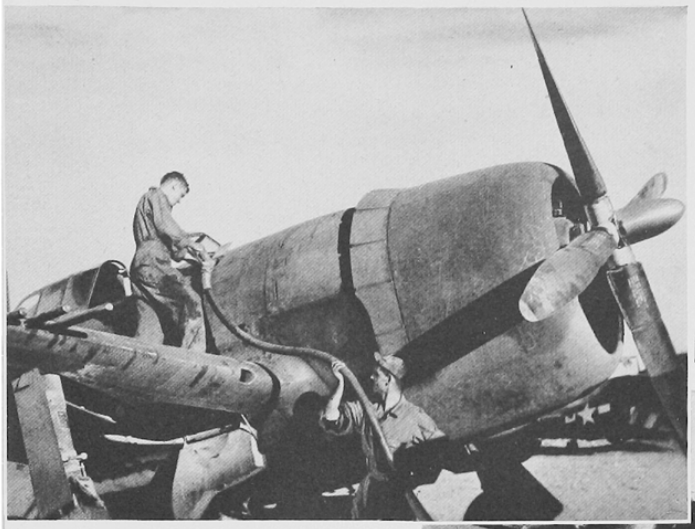
Gun-cleaning



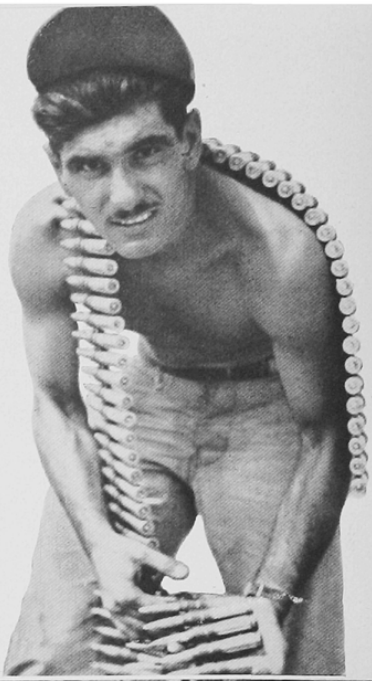
Bore-sighting

Tire repair





Gasing-up



Ammo-loading

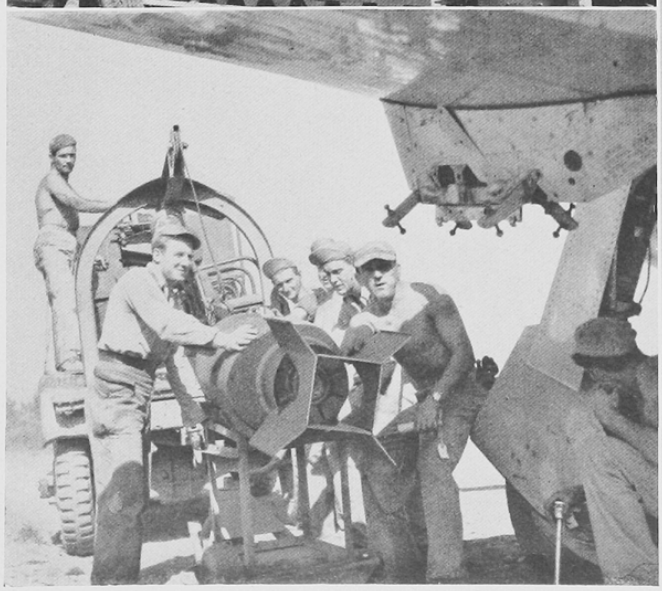


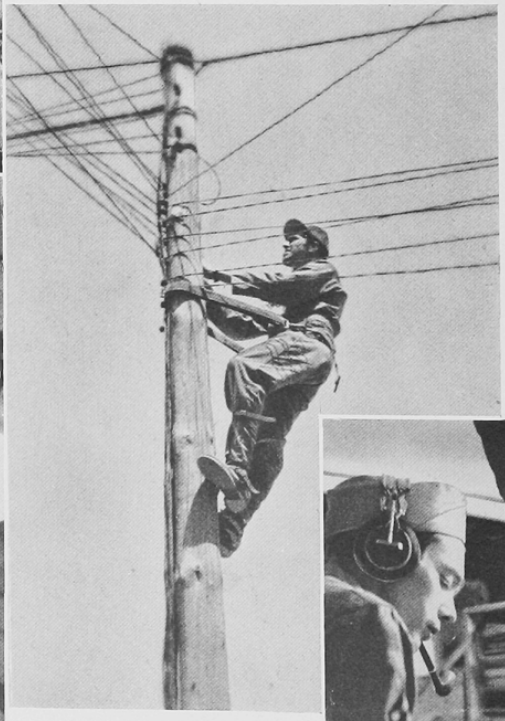
Bombing-up



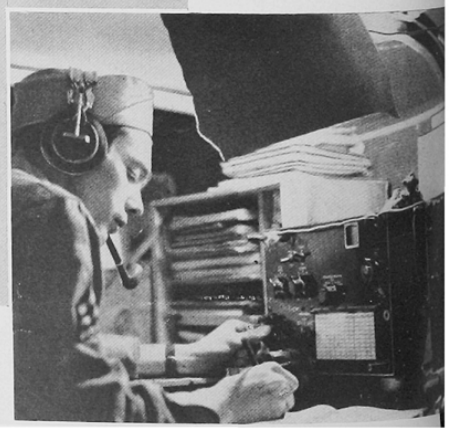
Rocket-loading

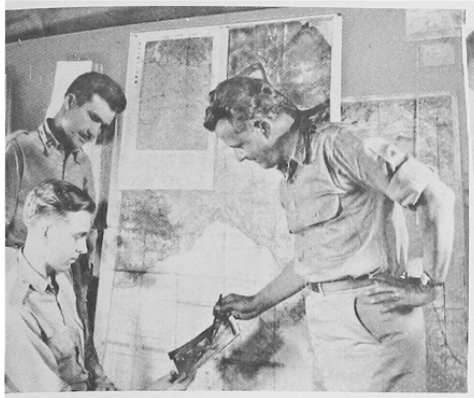






Communications





Mission Planning



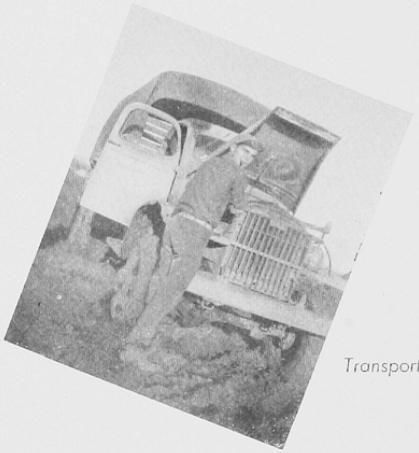
OPS co-ordination



Pilots to Briefing



Briefing



Transportation

Tower clearance

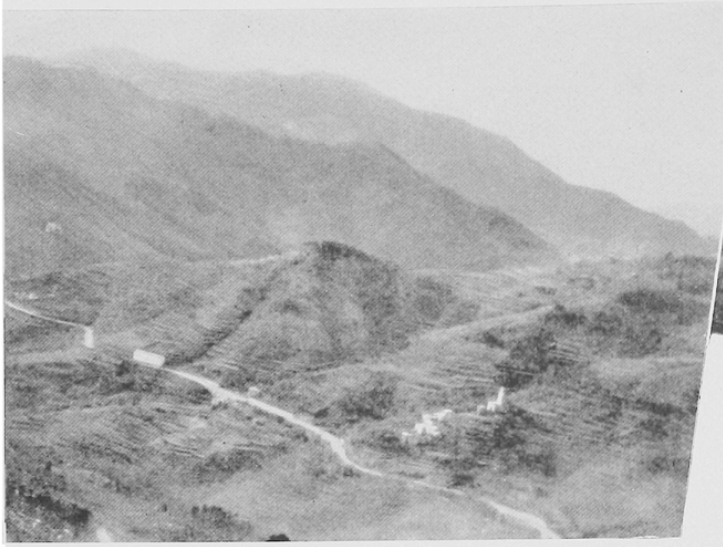


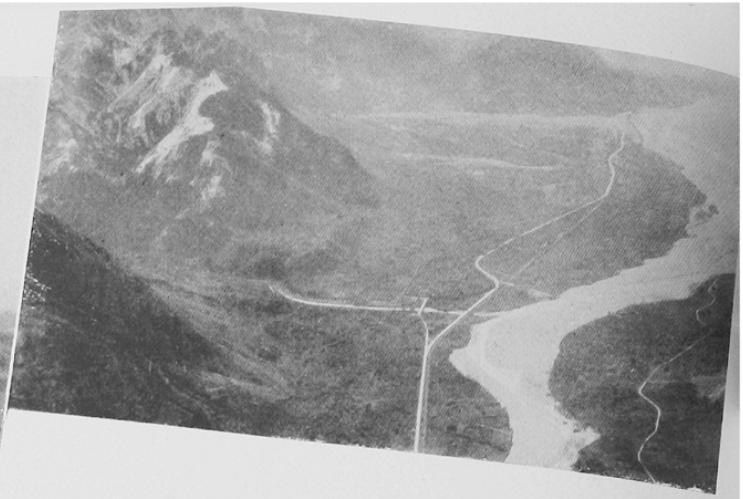
Mission airborne

Take-off



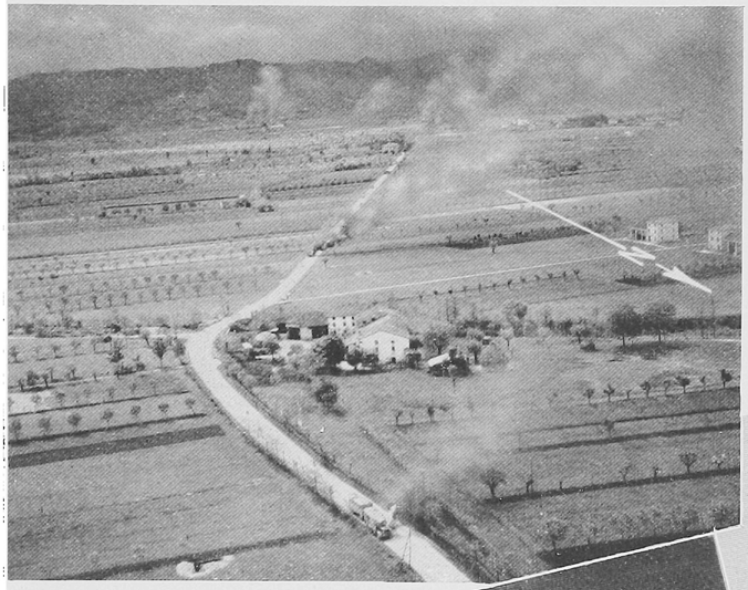






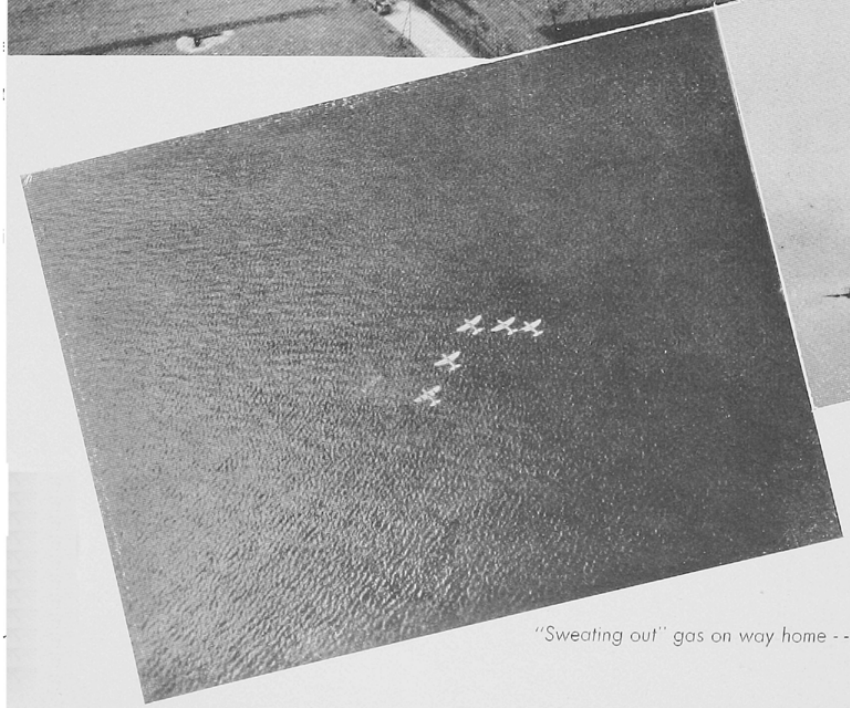
Over Mountains - - - and rivers





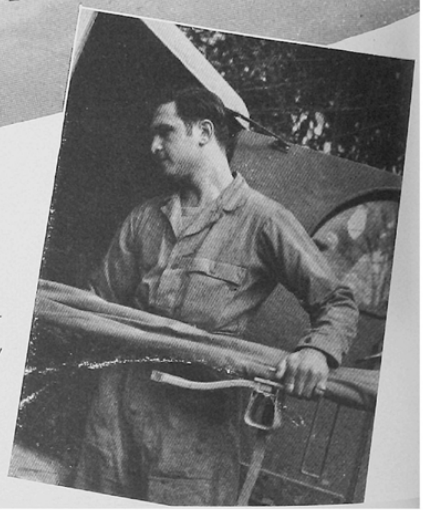
to the targets





"Sweating out" gas on way home - - -

The peel up - - - -
- - - with this trusty
chap ready
below - - -



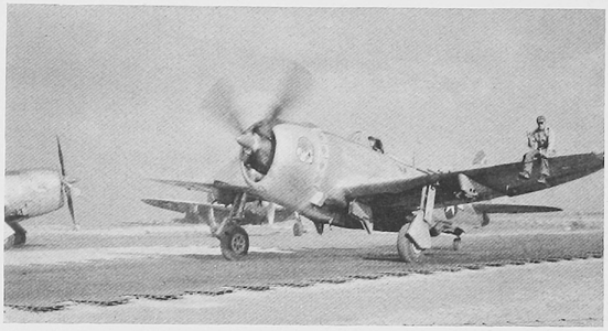








Who sometimes, along with crash
and fire crews, had work to do



But usually we "made it"



...r crew-chief's "Good show" . . .



. . . and came off the line by truck



. . . for interrogation

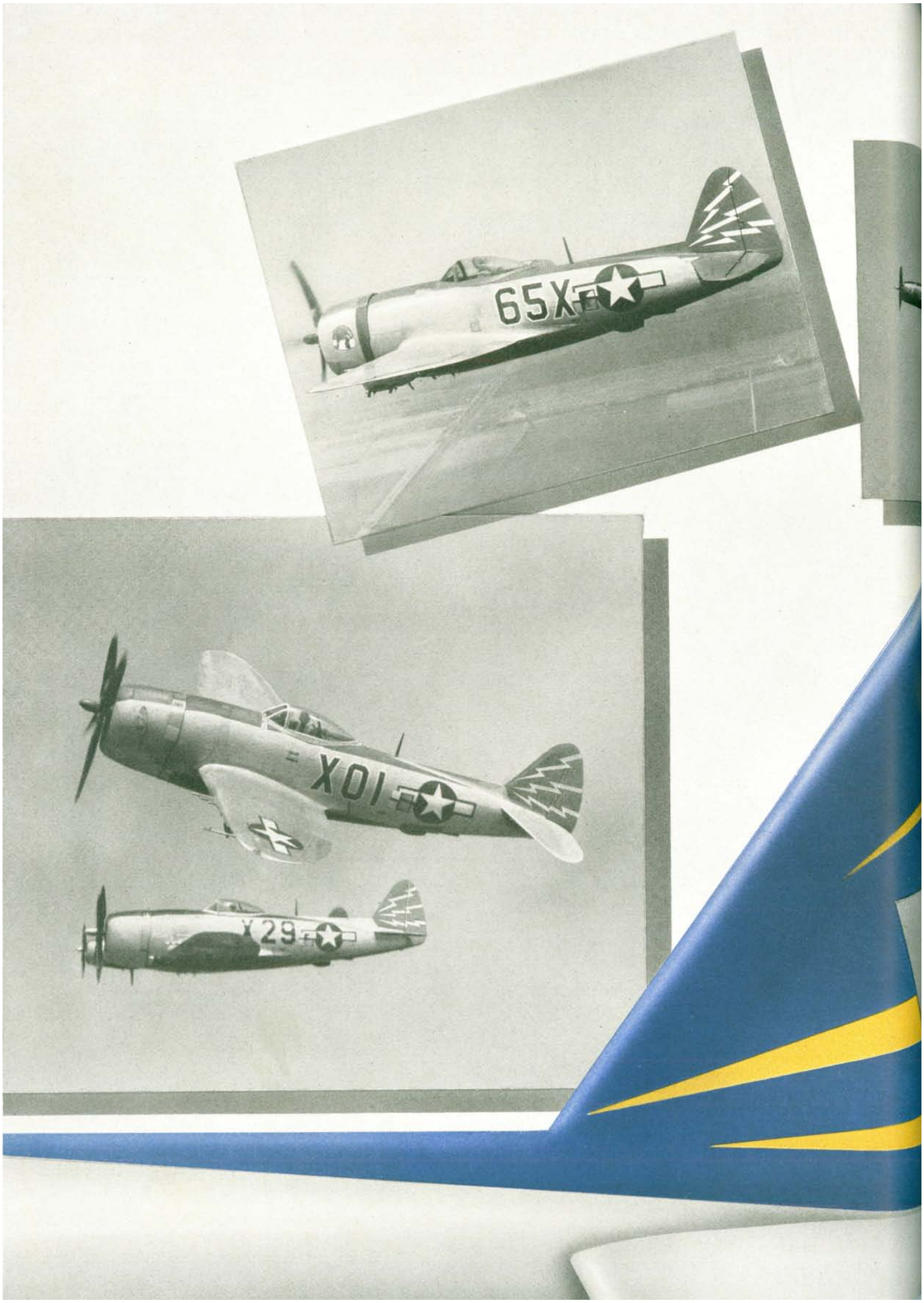


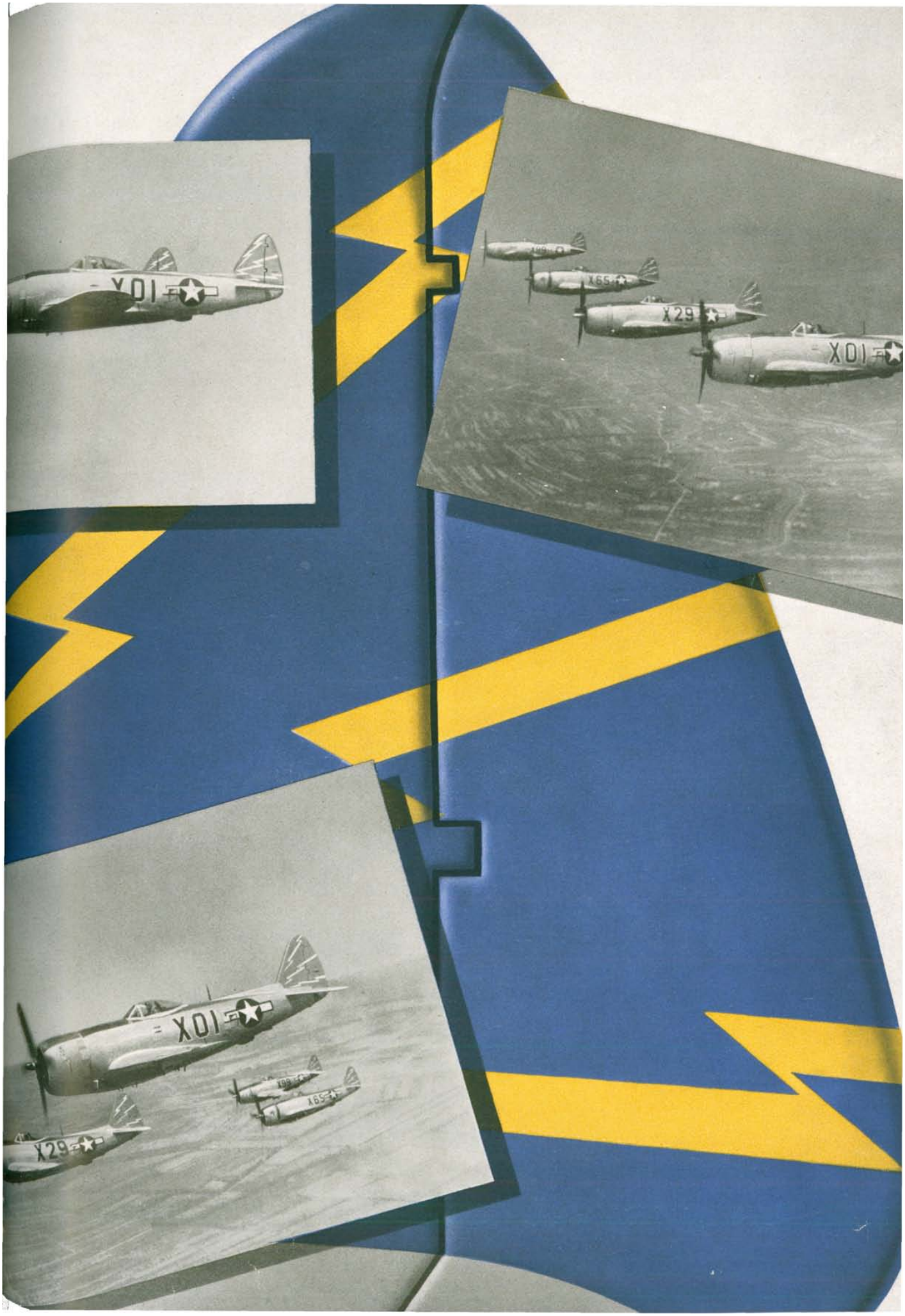
Sometimes a call for the "walrus"





"YOU'VE HAD IT, BROTHER!"


65X
X01
X29

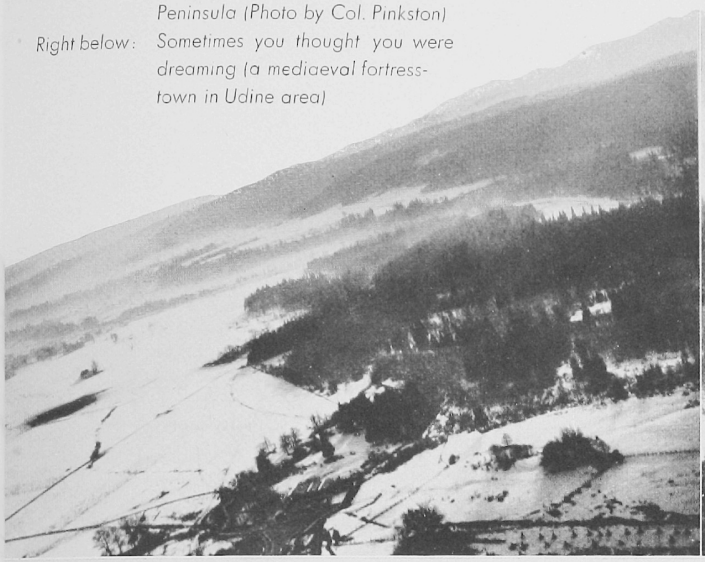

X01
X29
X01
X01
X29

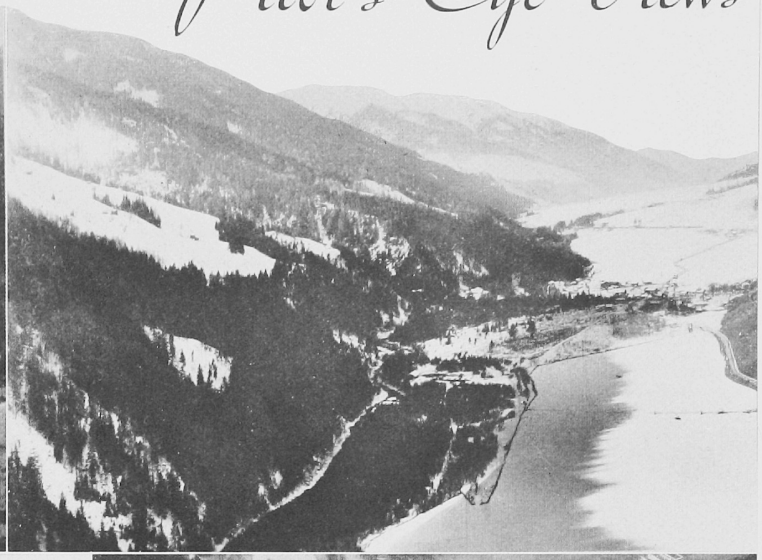
# Pilot's-Eye-Views

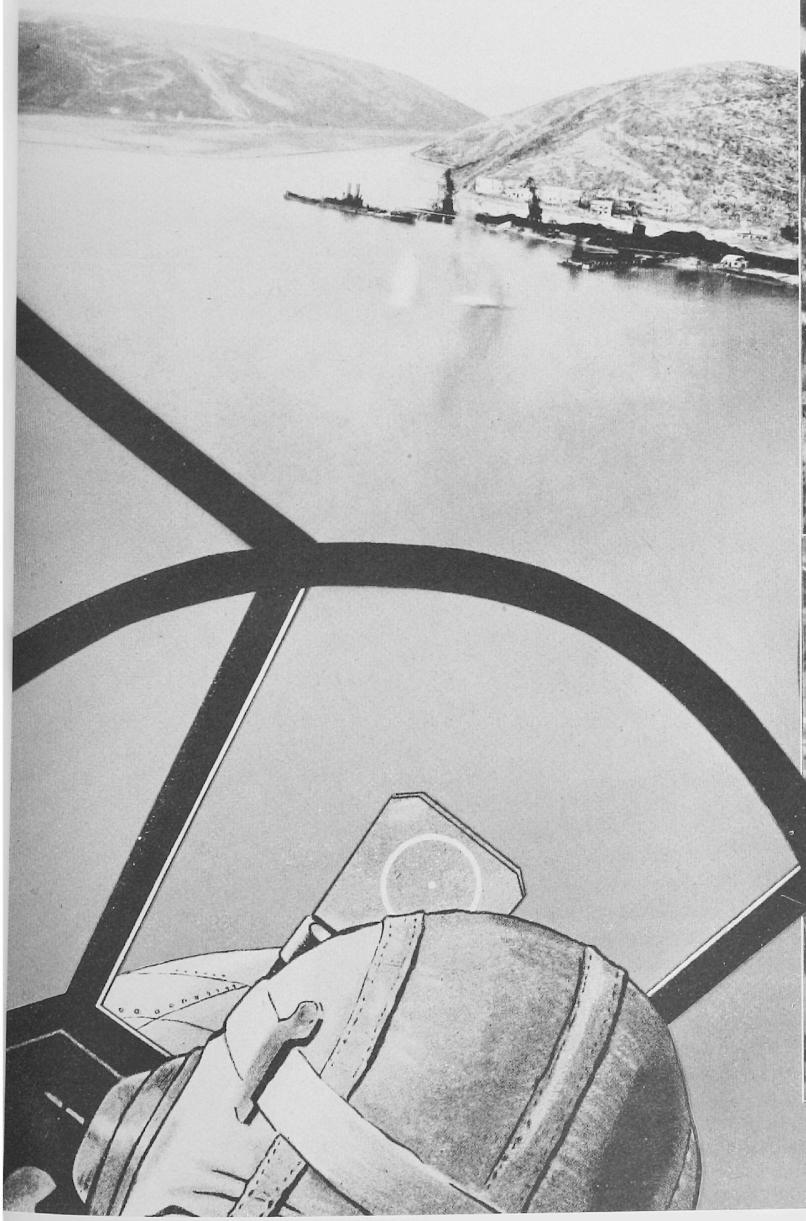
Above and right: *Typical Terrain around the Austro-Yougoslav Border in Winter of '45*

Left below: *"Rocketing" a target on Fiume Peninsula (Photo by Col. Pinkston)*

Right below: *Sometimes you thought you were dreaming (a mediaeval fortress-town in Udine area)*





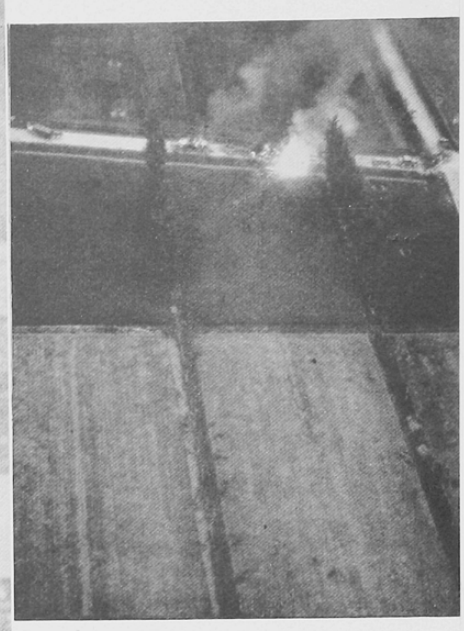








*Above: (left) "Comanches" over Portis, Italy in Feb '45, (right) "Skeeters" did a job on a Factory, April '45. Middle: "Skulls" ditto on Casarsa Rail Bridge, Italy, March '45. Below: More "Bridge-Work"*



DH on ammo truck

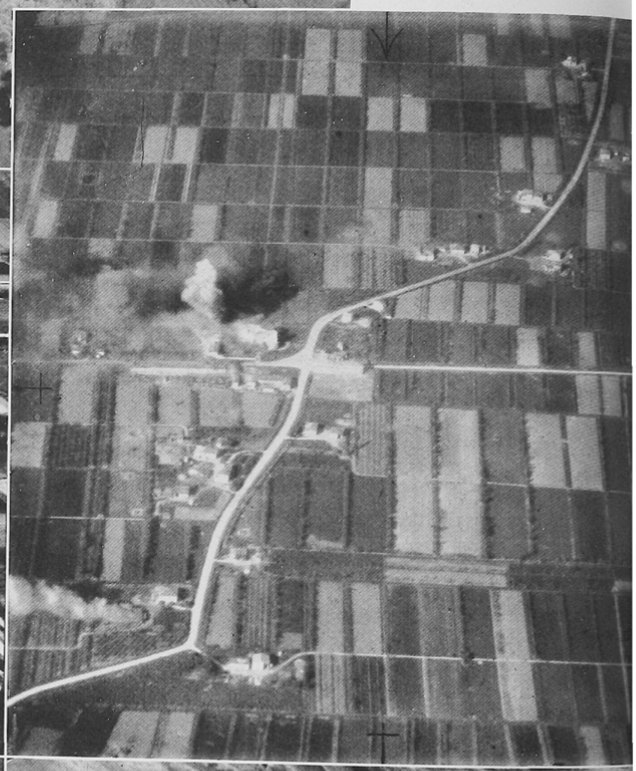
M/T "Flamers"




*Toward the last, helpless M/T convoys*

*Below: 85, 86, and 87, respectively, lending effective close-support in Po Valley during final push, April '45*





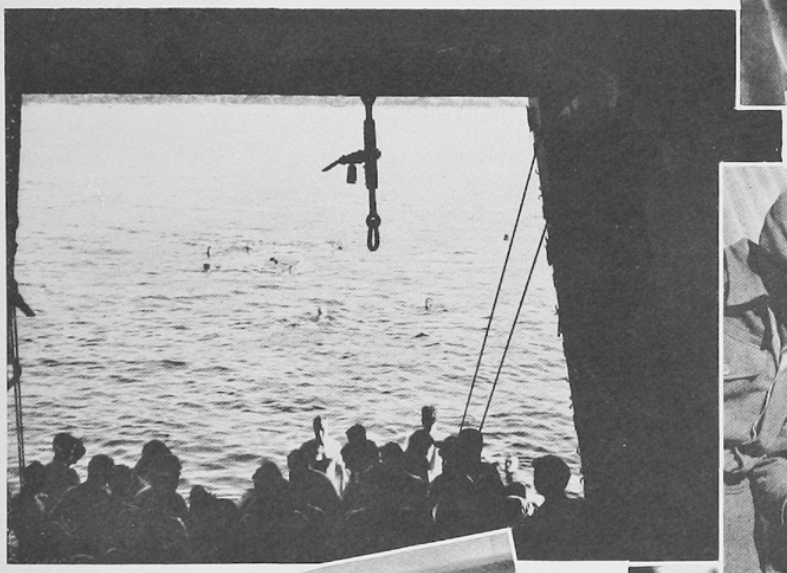






# FALCONS *At Ease...*



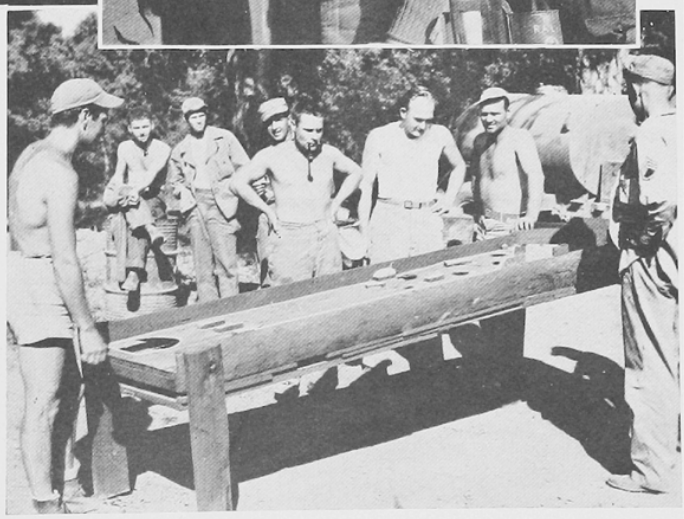


ding-Ship-
mming-





Pomigliano mascots



*Above: "Cementing" Anglo-American relations. Below: "Tilting" on Corsica*



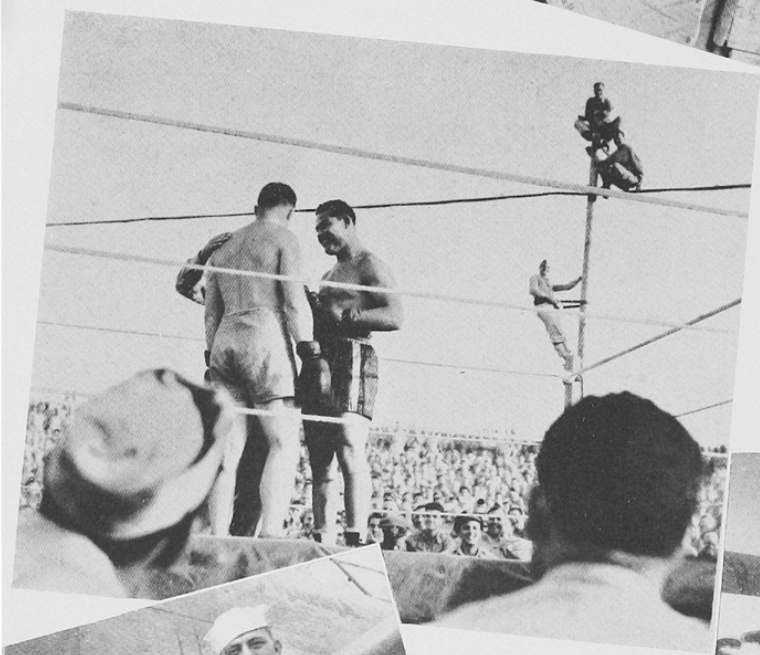
First 100-Mission Boys



Above: Movie-Hero



Hq. E. M. Mess
at Cesenatico



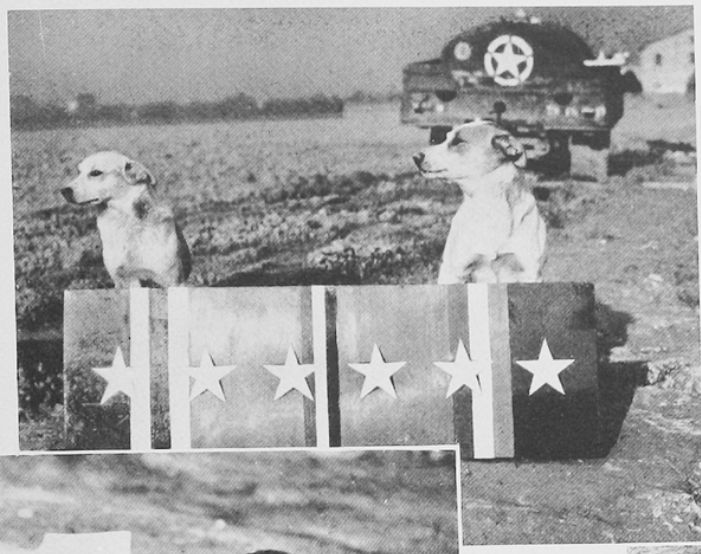
"The Brown Bomber"
on Corsica

What's in a name?

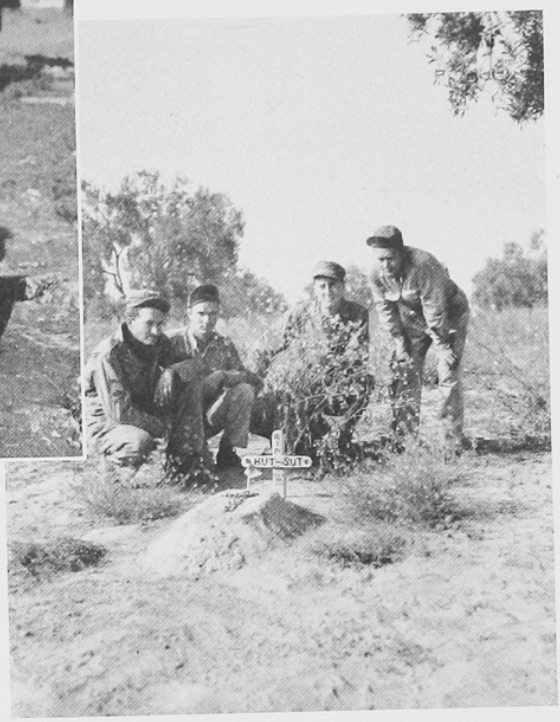





Reunion
on Corsica



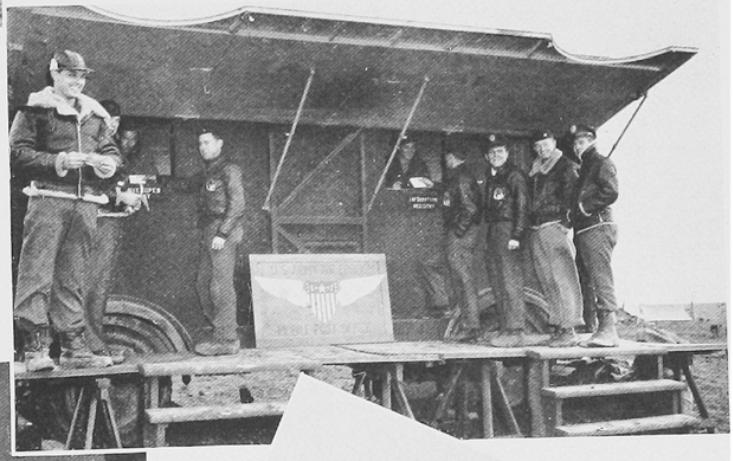
Old Campaigners







Cause — and effect?



Mobile Post-Office

The "Mello" Hour







The British taught us cricket



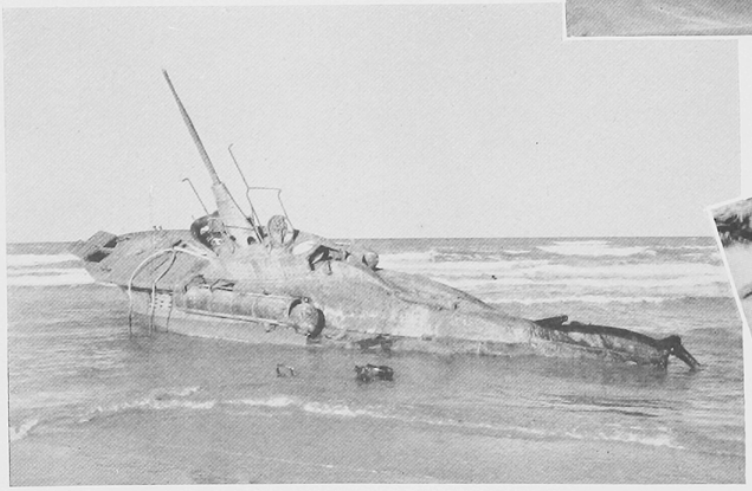
Sgt. Pumphries Won T-Bolt tail-design contest



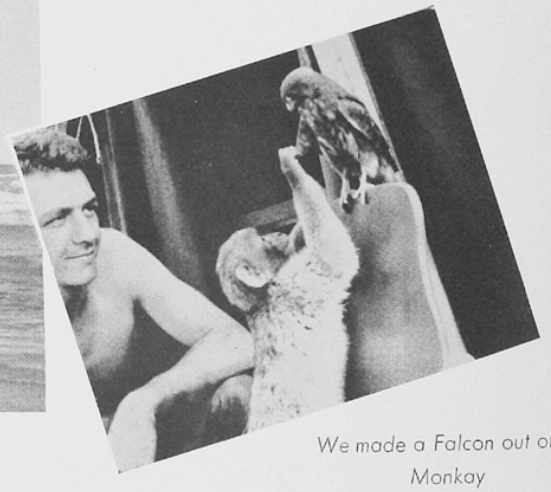
Jiny Falkenburg demonstrated Tennis, Ping-Pong, etc.

Sometimes even the Chaplain had Troubles





Somehow this whale met its Jonah near Fano. (5-man enemy "sub")

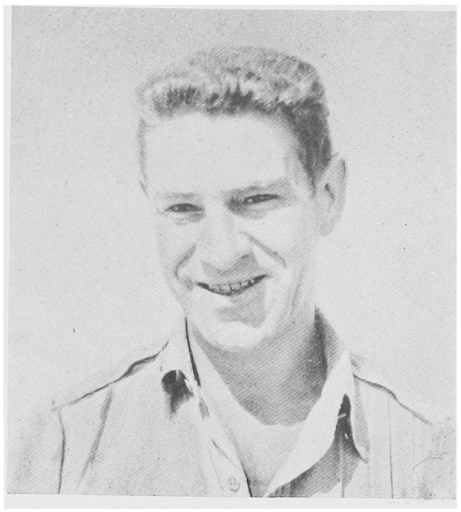


We made a Falcon out of a Monkay

# HEADQUARTERS SECTION



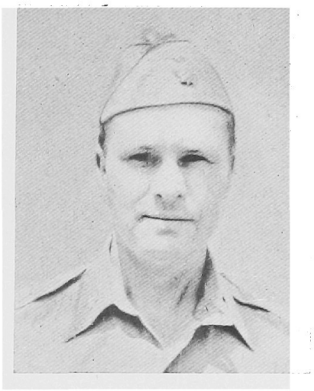
LT. COL. ROGER B. FILES
Los Angeles, Calif.
Deputy Group Commander, 17 June-5 Sept. 45



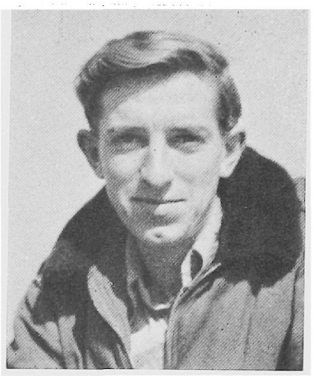
MAJOR HERMAN VAN FLEET, Jr.
Wya Isung, Pa.
Executive Officer



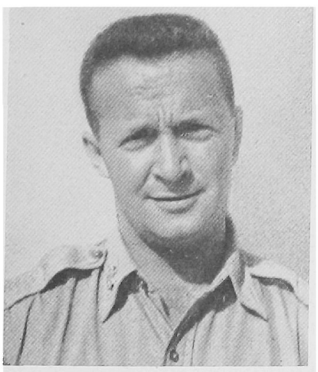
MAJOR HENRY E. WOOD
Danville, Ill.
Adjutant



MAJOR ORVAL D. HUNTER
Bloomfield, Ind.
Intelligence



MAJOR MALCOLM A. McNALL
Medford, Mass.
Operations



MAJOR GEORGE W. TREFTS
Webster Grove, Miss.
CP. Materiel Officer



MAJOR JAMES R. LANE
Plainview, Tex.
Air Inspector



MAJOR JAMES R. BLAIR, Jr.
San Angelo, Tex.
Flight Surgeon



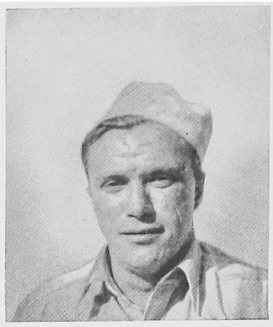
Pfc. HENRY ADERMAN
Minneapolis, Minn.
Cook



Cpl. BURTON E. BALCH
Ludlow, Vt.
Medics



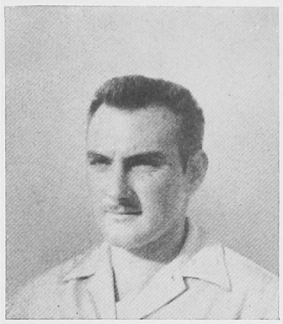
T/Sgt. RAYMOND S. BEAM
Bessemer City, N. C.
Enl. Air Inspector



M/Sgt. HARRY BEATTY
Oil City, Pa.
Armament Insp.



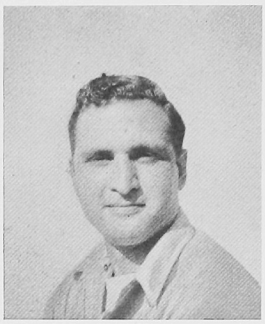
Capt. SEARCY BIRDSONG, Jr.
Longview, Tex.
Armament



T/Sgt. CHRISTOPHER J. BRADY
Roxbury, Mass.
Ord. Sec.-Chief



Sgt. JAMES P. BRAZELTON
Madison, Ala.
Medics



Pfc. MAURICE BRENNER
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Medics



Sgt. JOHN D. BRUNO
Androscoggin, Me.
Public Relations



Pfc. JOSEPH J. BROSCH
Waelder, Tex.
Cook



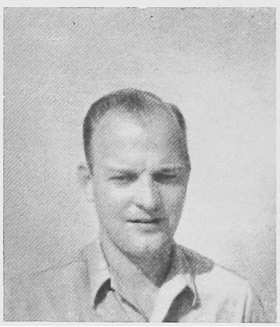
Sgt. ROBERT M. BURNS
Riverhead, N. Y.
1st Sgt. Hq. Det.



S/Sgt. ARTHUR L. CLARKE
Belmont, Mass.
Intelligence Sec.-Chief



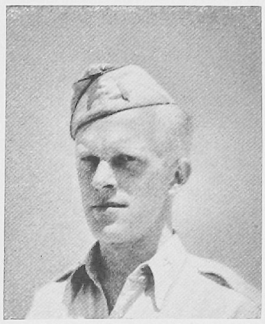
Cpl. JOHN P. CLEMENTS
Bueno Visto, Ga.
Medics



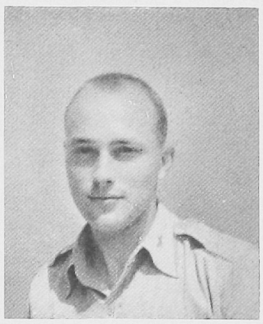
T/Sgt. RICHARD F. COMPSON
Columbus, Ohio
Sec.-Chief, Medics



Pfc. MELVIN H. CONGER
Maquon, Ill.
Cook



1st Lt. ALLEN CORDON
Washington, D. C.
Public Relations



2nd Lt. WILLIAM D. CRAINE
Sherburne, N. Y.
Photo



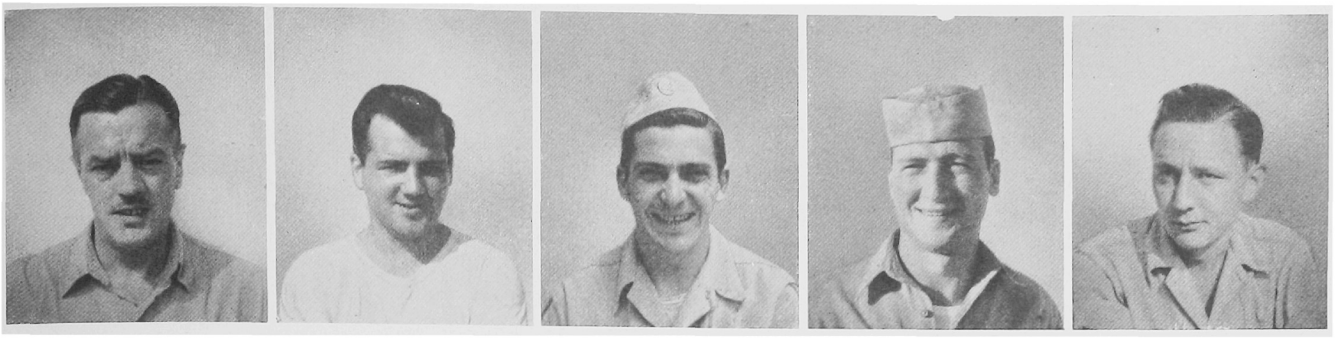
Capt. RICHARD H. CROSS
Concord Depot, Va.
Ass't Operations



Sgt. PETER DADDARIO
Hartford, Conn.
Transp. Sec.-Chief



Sgt. FRED J. DAMBRIE
Portland, Me.
Intelligence



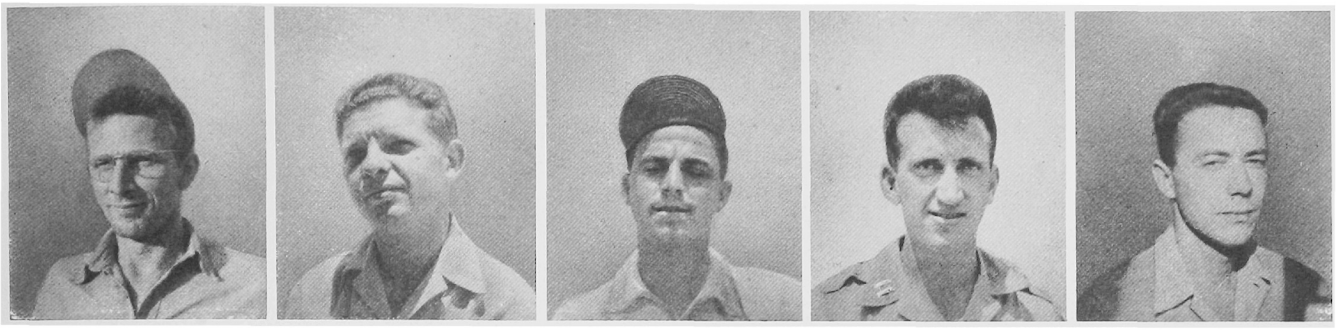
Cpl. WILLIAM T. DAVIES
Fort Wayne, Ind.
Statistical

S/Sgt. FRANK N. DELLAMALVA
Monesson, Pa.
Cryptographic

Cpl. ROYAL S. DUMONT
Lowell, Mass.
Communications

Sgt. CONRAD J. ERDMAN
Newark, N.J.
Medics

M/Sgt. WILLIAM E. FLEMING
Palmerton, Pa.
Comm. Maint.-Chief



T/Sgt. GEORGE A. FRANK
Pepin, Wis.
Comm. Maint.-Chief

Sgt. SAMUEL GOODMAN
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Signals Sec.-Chief

Sgt. FRANK A. GRENERT
Kilbuck, Ohio
Cryptographic

Capt. HAROLD B. HALL
Garfield, Kas.
Ass't. Operations

Sgt. ROBERT L. HALL
Johnstown, N.Y.
1st Sgt. Hq. Det.



S/Sgt. CURTIS HANCOCK
Stanton, Tex.
Materiel

S/Sgt. KENNETH C. HANDLEY
Grayville, Ill.
OPS., Sec.-Chief

1st Lt. GILBERT J. HAYES
Chicago, Ill.
Cryptographic

Pfc. JOHN R. HERBERT
Vanderbilt, Pa.
Transportation

Cpl. JOSEPH J. HERNIK
Buffalo, N.Y.
Medics



T/Sgt. JAMES M. HILL
Jacksonville, Fla.
Materiel Sec.-Chief

Cpl. JOHN C. HOLSCHER
Natrona, Pa.
Orderly Room

Capt. GUY C. HOWARD
Paxton, Ill.
Engineering

S/Sgt. RAYMOND J. HURLEY
Escanaba, Mich.
Admin. N. C. O.

1st Lt. RAYMOND P. JOHNSON
Westwood, N. J.
Ordnance



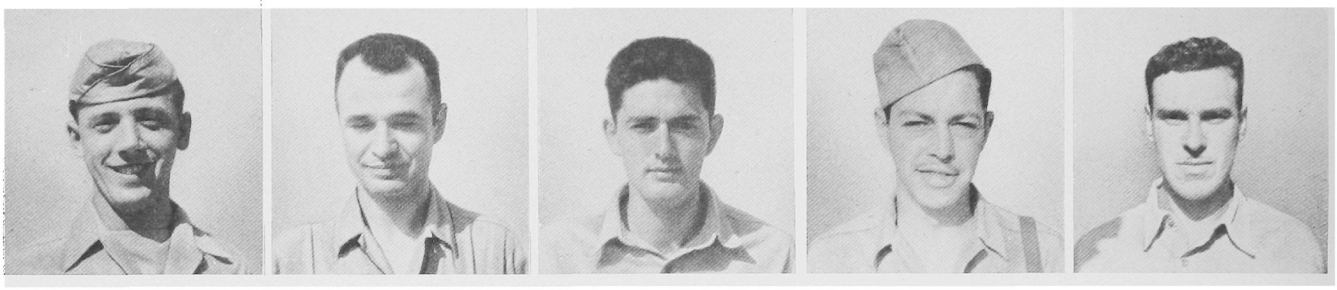
Cpl. ROBERT KENNEDY
Falconer, N.Y.
Cook

Cpl. EDWARD E. KINGSLEY
Wonewoc, Wis.
Transportation

1st Lt. KENNETH J. KNABB
Alhambra, Cal.
Communications

S/Sgt. PAUL P. KURTICK
Saugus, Mass.
C.Q. Officers Quarters

Cpl. LAWRENCE L. LE MAY
Kenosha, Wis.
Supply



Sgt. CLEMENT L. LUCAS
Springdale, Pa.
Materiel

M/Sgt. JAMES C. LYNCH
Ireland, Tex.
Sgt. Major

Cpl. JAMES P. McDERMOTT
Santa Barbara, Cal.
Sp. Serv. Athletics

S/Sgt. MARSHAL E. MILLER
Detroit, Mich.
Admin. N.C.O.

S/Sgt. CLARENCE L. MITCHEL
Spokane, Wash.
Wire Chief



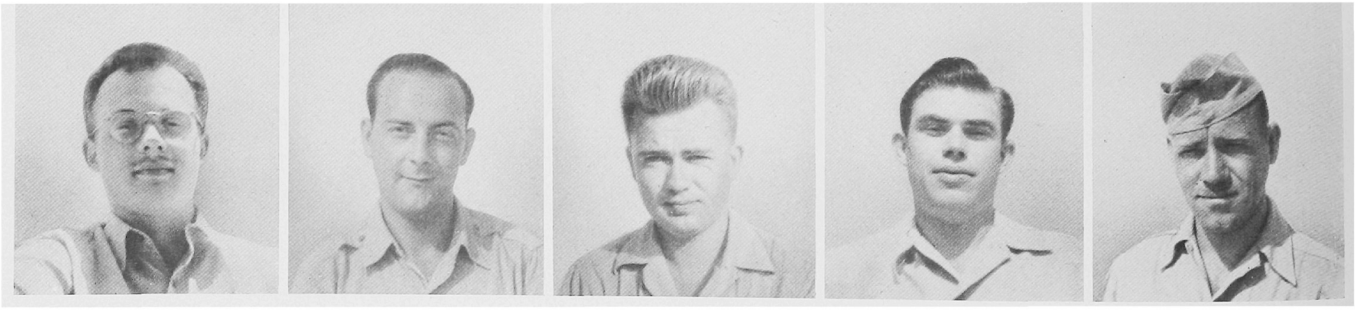
Corp. LINDELL L. MORRIS
Manhattan, Beach, Cal.
Ops. Clerk

Capt. ESTON E. MULLINIX
Jamestown, Tenn.
Dental Officer

Cpl. WILLIAM R. NEWLON
Clarksburg, W. Va.
Transportation

Pvt. HARRY G. OBERNE
Washington, D. C.
Cook

Cpl. JACK O'BRIEN
Oconomowoc, Wis.
Communications



Cpl. ROYAL E. OLSON
Milwaukee, Wis.
Photo

T/Sgt. JOHN F. ORR
Connersville, Ind.
Crypt. Sec.-Chief

Cpl. ELMER H. PETERSON
Chicago, Ill.
OPS. Clerk

Cpl. WALTER R. PHELPS
Colerain, N. C.
Mess-Sgt.

Cpl. JOSEPH R. POTHIER
Springfield, Mass.
Chaplain Ass't.



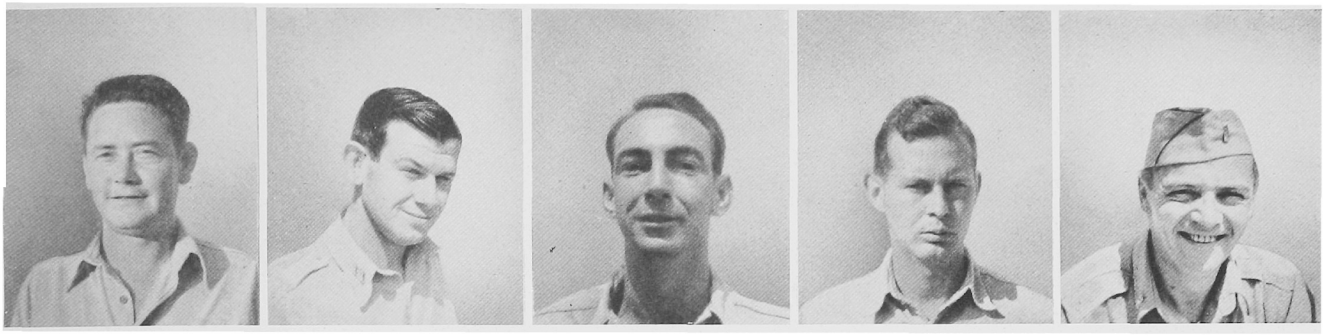
1st Lt. JOHN C. POWERS
Sparta, Mich.
Intelligence

Capt. LORRAINE P. RAKE
Evansville, Ind.
C. O. Hq. Detachment

Capt. JULIUS C. ROBBINS
Philadelphia, Pa.
Dental Officer

Cpl. JACK P. ROBERTS Jr.
Sherman, Tex.
Supply

Capt. WILLIAM B. ROSE
River Forest, Ill.
Intelligence



Sgt. WALTER C. ROWE
Atlanta, Ga.
Dental Ass't.

Capt. SAMUEL O. RUFF
Old Fort, N. C.
Special Service

Pfc. HOYLE O. SAINTSING
Lexington, N. C.
Communications

T/Sgt. KENNETH W. SCHUCHMAN
Fairview, Okla.
Admin. N. C. O.

1st Lt. PHILIP A. SMALL
Reading, Mass.
Statistical



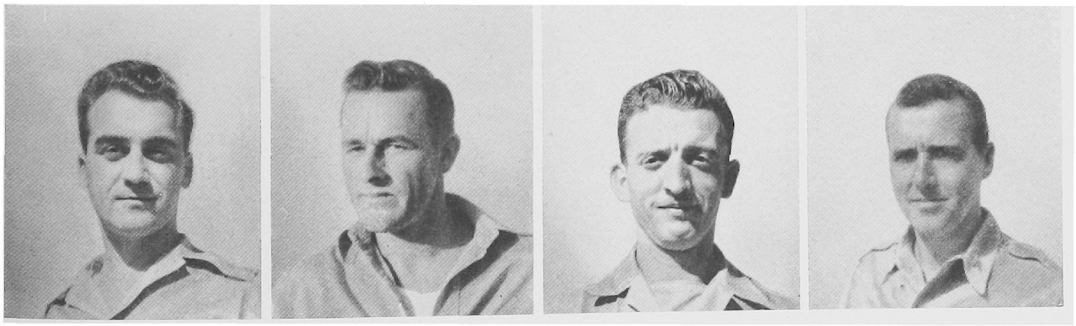
S/Sgt. WILLIAM M. THOMPSON
Sandy Springs, S. C.
Supply Chief

Cpl. LEON H. WEATHERFORD
Darlington, S. C.
Medics

Capt. CLAIR N. WEINHEIMER
Syracuse, N. Y.
Supply

Capt. FRANK E. WHITE
Los Angeles, Cal.
Personal Equipment

Cpl. WILLIAM H. WILEY
Kansas City, Mo.
Medics



Pfc. PETER J. WINTER
Camden, N. J.
Cryptographic

Pfc. DAN P. WHITTEMORE
Newnan, Ga.
Medics

Pfc. RAYMOND YAKSIC
Pittsburgh, Pa.
Medics

Capt. LLOYD R. YEAGLE
Londonderry, N. H.
Chaplain

Major
RICHARDS H. HOFFMAN
Philadelphia, Pa.
Flight Surgeon

## GROUP HEADQUARTERS MEN NOT INDIVIDUALLY PICTURED

Capt. Kenneth D. Boggs Group Operations-Pilot
Killed in Action

### GROUND OFFICERS

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lt. Col. Edwin F. Baker | Executive Officer | 1st. Lt. John A. Innis | Weather Officer |
| Maj. William U. Bruch | Intelligence | Capt. Robert E. Laundree | Communications |
| Maj. Daniel H. Callahan | Adjutant | Maj. John McEwen | Operations |
| Capt. John J. Darmody | Transportation | Capt. Walter E. Marks | Assistant Intelligence |
| Capt. Irving J. Fernebok | Dental Surgeon | Maj. Guy A. Stewart | Communications |
| Maj. Richards H. Hoffman | Flight Surgeon | 1st. Lt. Robert J. Sutton | Statistical Officer |

### ENLISTED MEN

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cpl. Douglas H. Beetham | Communications | T/Sgt. Robert F. Krause | Personnel Clerk |
| Cpl. John E. Briggs, Jr. | Communications | S/Sgt. Raymond Martin | Personnel Clerk |
| Sgt. William F. Burns | Materiel Clerk | S/Sgt. Peter J. Martinyk | Materiel Clerk |
| Cpl. Edmund F. Chevalier | | Cpl. James M. Moran | |
| T/Sgt. George E. Coleman | Communications | Cpl. Clarence M. Pratt | Operations Clerk |
| Sgt. Johnson H. Creamer | | Cpl. Charles J. Schnaars | Mail Clerk |
| T/Sgt. Richard F. Hobbs, Jr. | Operations Clerk | Sgt. Edward F. Scott | Intelligence Clerk |
| S/Sgt. William O. Howell | Operations Clerk | Sgt. John E. Williams | Communications |
| | Cpl. Wesley W. Wise | Intelligence Clerk | |

# THE FLYING SKULLMEN



EIGHTY-FIFTH FIGHTER SQUADRON

COMPILED AND EDITED BY

S/Sgt. Joseph P. Monaco, Cpl. Stephen Mendel, Cpl. Louis Dimas, Cpl. William A. Ayler, S/Sgt. Henry O. Tomlin, S/Sgt. Elvin G. Hubbard, S/Sgt. Harry K. Ebbesen, Cpl. Herman Finkelstein, Cpl. Charles A. Jarquhar, Cpl. Harold E. Stahl, Capt. Henry J. Winsauer, Capt. Walter J. Seidel

WITH GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

For Photographs courteously donated by: 79th Ftr. Gp. Photo Section, 85th Squadron Gun Camera Section, and 85th Squadron Camera Club. Cpl. Clarence W. Mead, Sgt. Allen Erick, Sgt. Milo E. Foreman, S/Sgt. Monte L. Whittenberg, S/Sgt. George L. McCommack, S/Sgt. George Lux, S/Sgt. Arthur H. Gunther, Sgt. Richard L. Gorley, T/Sgt. Bernard M. Glassman




"Birthplace" — Charlotte, N. C.

The members of the FLYING SKULL SQUADRON, coming from the farthest limits of the United States, first assembled at Charlotte, North Carolina in April of 1942. They were a diverse but experienced group with personnel drawn from many sources, 54th pursuit Group, 56th, 52nd, and 308th Air Base Groups and Selfridge Field, Michigan. These men were originally organized into the 91st pursuit Squadron of the 81st pursuit Group, but on 28 April 1942 the unit was re-designated as the 85th Fighter Squadron of the 79th Fighter Group, the name it has borne ever since.

On June 21st the Squadron moved by rail to the East Boston Airport at East Boston, Massachusetts. Here the Squadron began to take shape as some men were dropped and others brought in from the 57th Fighter Group, which was awaiting overseas shipment. Among the new arrivals was Captain Jacob F. Schoelkopf IV who became the first official Commanding Officer on July 1st as the Squadron moved to the new Army Air Base at Bedford, Massachusetts.

It was here that the Squadron emblem, a silver skull with golden wings affixed, set against a background of deep blue, was first adopted, and officially registered. Both pilots and planes, the Curtiss Warhawk, were then assigned, and training began in earnest. Daily missions were flown, and several coastal intercepts attempted. This continued until mid-September when the entire Group was alerted for overseas duty.

Late on a dull, drizzly Sunday afternoon the final word came through on the Group teletype. The alert was ended, and overseas shipment was no longer a rumor but a fact. The Group was to leave Bedford by train early Monday evening for the marshalling area at Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania to await shipment to a foreign theater of war. Last minute preparations were hectic. All Sunday night details of coated men slushed through the rain and ankle deep mud, packing, crating and painting. Lights burned among the trees down on the line until early morning. There was no let up Monday until finally late in the afternoon there was a semblance of order in the chaos.

By seven o'clock Monday evening the convoy of trucks had rolled out and the Eighty-fifth area was deserted—silent except for the flapping of empty tents in the cold wind; and the reflection of a lone light glittered in a puddle of water on the company street. It was cold and wet at the Bedford railroad station, and our "secret" move was executed under the eyes of perhaps a hundred good citizens of Bedford, most of them wearing skirts and between the ages of 18 and 25 years. There were many hasty goodbyes, perhaps a few tearful, hidden in the gloom of the station platform. In the wake of the Eighty-fifth's three month occupancy of Bedford air-port, were goodwill, many engagements, and a score of broken hearts.

The crowded train finally moved away, packed with olive drab, aisles stacked with barracks bags, musette bags, guns and all the paraphernalia of war. After a



*Bivouac at Bedford, Mass.*

sleepless night of "last flings", with bottles making their way up and down the cars, the squadron left the train at Philadelphia for their last breakfast in an American restaurant.

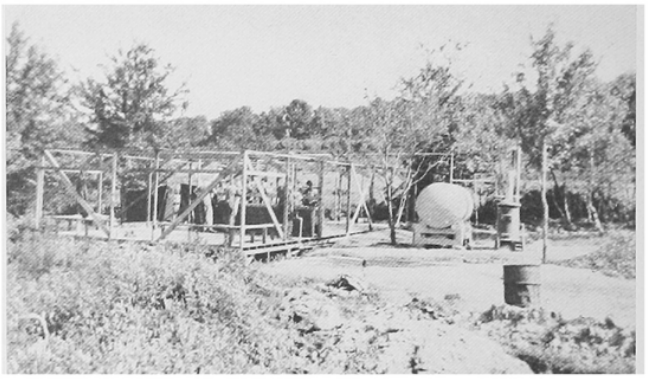
Late afternoon of September 29 we arrived at the Gap. There were six days of restless inactivity, marked only by early morning hikes into the autumn tinted Pennsylvania hills, one crack at the rifle range, last minute long-distance phone calls, "shots" each having a special significance: cholera for India, yellow fever for the jungle, typhus for the desert. They were capably administered by Lt. Henry J. Winsauer, who joined us at the Gap as squadron flight surgeon.

With the exception of two men allowed into Harrisburg to purchase engagement rings for the girls they left behind, everyone was restricted to the huge post. The officers listened to lectures on convoy procedure, with disturbing visions of submarine wolf packs haunting the wake of the transport, sea sickness, and God knows what else.

It was a relief when, on October 5th, we were ordered to Hampton Roads, Virginia, and late in the afternoon began another all night train ride. Mid-morning the next day, as the train rounded a curve towards the pier, we craned heads for a glimpse of the ship that was to carry us over 15,000 miles through some of the most perilous waters in the world.

Her gray hull was hardly visible against the back drop of cranes, and booms of the loading platform, and little more could be seen from under the shed-roof as the squadron marched up the gangplank into the yawning doors in the side of the ship, leaving American soil for many adventuresome months. Our transport turned out to be the Mauretania, Cunard luxury liner. Many of her peacetime fittings were still apparent in the lounges and dining rooms, but she had been stripped for war . . . painted a dusky gray, with ominous guns mounted on bow and stern. Her normal accomodations for 1,500 were swelled to 7000 officers and men of the Air Corps, Engineers, Ordnance, and Medical Corps, plus a small group of American Field Service personnel, and missionaries bound for the Far East.

The entire day after embarking was spent gazing longingly at the low Virginia shore, and exploring the numerous decks of the huge liner. For most of us it was



*Bedford Showers*

a new experience, which in the 37 days that followed lost its novelty. Very early morning, October 7, the transport slid out of her berth at the Roads and headed out to sea. By the time the men rolled clumsily out of their hammocks under the enclosed decks the ship was well out, and the Virginia dunes were disappearing on the horizon astern.

Life aboardship was routine but not unpleasant. The first days were bright and warm; the sea smooth and sparkling. Boat drills were welcome diversions as we were initiated into the art of abandoning ship, hoping it would never become a reality. News and musical programs were broadcast to all parts of the ship by public address system. Often in the evening impromptu song fests would take place on the blacked-out decks under a sky brilliant with stars. During the long days, decks were crowded with soldiers sleeping, reading, playing cards, some just sitting.

Sunday morning October 18, the ship turned in towards the South American coast, and the unforgetable Sugar Loaf of Rio De Janeiro hove into sight across the bow. We had safely traversed the treacherous Carib-

bean. A German built aircraft with Brazilian markings escorted us into the famed harbor. As we approached, the city was almost hidden by a heavy rain squall. A few moments later, from the center of the harbor, we could see the shore line of Rio, with tall modern hotels gleaming above the boulevards. Tenders tied up to our ship pouring fuel and feeding fruit and vegetables into the hold. At night the famous resort city winked at us from all sides of the bay, the myriad lights hinting of wine, women, and tango music, inviting but inaccessible. No one was allowed to leave the ship. During our two day stay a small but faithful Brazilian destroyer ceaselessly circled the Mauretania. Yankee trading ability was pitted against the tourist wise Brazilians, and a few bottles of liquor and some Brazilian money made their way amidships. Monday October 20 dawned clear and we sailed again, all determined some day, somehow to return to Rio.

It now became definite that Africa was our first destination but whether it was to only a stop over with India in the offing was a point of conjecture. We headed far south toward Antartic waters to avoid the regular U-boat infested shipping lanes. The weather changed abruptly bringing two days of heavy seas and driving winds. The decks were deserted, except for a few hardy souls with ice in their blood and love for the bounding main.

The great ship pitched and heaved, and at least 6000 of the 7000 souls aboard groaned and heaved in unison. After two days the weather cleared as we set our course back northward, bound for Durban, South Africa.

Friday, October 30 we docked. As we slowly drifted into the slip, a large-bosomed woman greeted us with a lusty rendition of "God Bless America", through a completely superfluous mecaphone. We had been promised shore leave in Durban and received a partial payment in British currency, a mass of shillings, pounds, and pence that held promise of monetary difficulties. Coal black natives scrambled for cigarettes on the wharf tossing up oranges in return. Beyond the busy docks we could see the city large and modern, with signs proclaiming "Crown Beer' and "Bar". Early in the afternoon troops started pouring out of the ship, and a wave of American soldiery swept into the heart of the city. We all gorged on steak and chicken, drank innumerable bottles of warm British beer, whiskey, gin and brandy. We found that the term "Southern Hospitality" was not peculiar to the Southern United States. The generous South Africans feted the Americans like royalty and left an unforgetable impression.

We headed out for sea again of Sunday October 31, bound for Suez. Just outside the harbor the ship stopped, hailed down by a British gun boat, waited a few minutes and proceeded. It later developed that an enemy U-boat had been reported in coastal waters. We sailed up the African coast, through the Mozambique channel. At night, as we passed west of the island of Madagascar, we could see flashes of gun fire marking the final stand of the French against the British expeditionary forces which would later capture the strategic base.

Rounding the easternmost tip of Africa and passing through the Gulf of Aden at the entrance to the Red Sea, we heard the good news of Montgomery's success at Alamein. Here we had our first glimpse of the dry, forbidding sheer cliffs of the Arabian Desert. Then late one night we passed through the Gates of Hell, and on mid-morning of November 12 the motors stopped, the anchor was dropped into the Gulf of Suez, after 37 days at sea.

Headquarters and the 85th were the first units to disembark into the large flat tenders manned by dirty turbaned Arabs. The barges moved slowly across the Gulf toward the low dusty shoreline of port Tewfik. A short time later the Squadron lined up for its first formation on foreign soil. We were met by our operations officer, Captain Cimaglia, who brought news of the Group's first casualty. Group Commander Peter McGoldrick, missing from a strafing mission with the 57th Fighter Group at Charing Cross in Lybia. The war had struck home, and we all suffered the loss of a valuable leader.

Squadron pilots had reported to Grenier Field, Manchester, New Hampshire after the ground personnel had departed. On October 22nd they left for Miami, Florida, boarding any available aircraft for the trip across. They stopped at Natal, Brazil, Acension Island, Accra on the Gold Coast, Khartoum in the Sudan, and Cairo, Egypt.

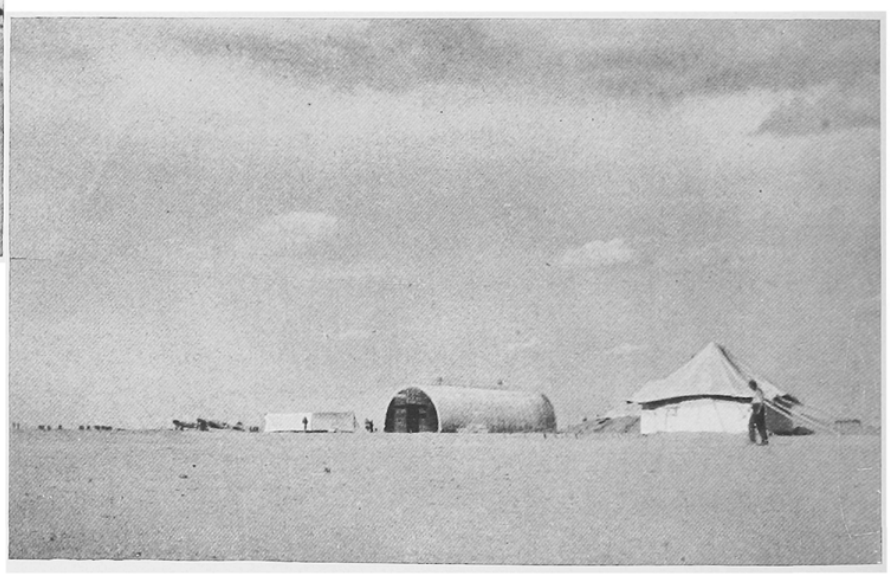
The Squadron now boarded a special train of the Egyptian Railways, Ltd., a sort of "Toonerville Trolley", which took us through the decrepit and tumbling city of Suez. Hordes of ragged children, dirty beyond belief, ran along with the train screaming "Bakscheesh", a cry

that followed us 1,500 miles across North Africa. Late in the afternoon we arrived at Kasfareet, a British transient camp near the Great Bitter Lake, southeast of Cairo. The desert-war-wise English took charge from that point.

We were quartered in brick barracks far from luxurious. Everyone slept on hard concrete floors. We froze at night, sweated during the day and fought hordes of flies. Officers and men alike almost perished on British rations dring the five-day stay. Some of the offerings in the mess were beyond reasonable description, perhaps some of the meat was camel; one taste was not sufficient to determine. At night we saw two-year-old motion pictures in one of the Great Shafta's semi-outdoor theaters, and during the day there was swimming in the Suez if you liked ice water. We had here our first contact with the "Limey's", beginning a relationship first characterized by prejudice but later on by mutual confidence and trust.



*Kasfareet, Egypt*



*L.G. 174*

The desert landscape of Kasfareet, bleak and uncompromising, filled us with awe. The day we were scheduled to leave we had our first taste of a desert sandstorm. The fine brown particles blew in from the hills to the west, obliterating the barracks, seeping through every crack.

We stuck to the buildings, huddling on the floor with heads under blankets.

On the night of November 17 we boarded another train for Amaryia, 20 miles southwest of Alexandria, on the desert road to Cairo. During the night we passed through Cairo, arriving at the dusty hill top Amaryia about midday. English trucks took us to our final destination in the midst of another sandstorm. The black tarmac desert road was swept with twisting rivers of sand, driven by a high wind. We turned off the main road into nowhere and our hearts sank. There was nothing to be seen through the haze of the storm except the dull yellow floor of the desert and occasional clumps of thorny brush . . . The storm lifted as we reached our own area, on the west side of the field, undistinguishable and simply known as Landing Ground no. 174. It was none too encouraging with a few forlorn and lonesome tents flapping in the wind and desolation as far as the eye could see.

A sight most of us will never forget was that of white-aproned Mess Sergeant Roy Davis standing grinning with a big spoon in his hand amid pots and pans of his mess tent, the only human spot on the entire landscape. We piled out of the trucks and wasted little time digging into our first American meal since leaving the United States. After 37 days aboard ship, five days on British emergency rations, and 24 hours without a meal, the mess at 174 was a Diamond Jim Brady banquet.

Then we set up tents. During the following week our section of wasteland was transformed into a livable permanent base. Tents were banked and lights and com-

munications established, slit trenches dug on orders although we never had occasion to use them for months. The desert occupation of improvising had an early start at 174, and it proved invaluable across the 1,500 miles of desert to the west. Empty gasoline drums were used for showers, latrines and mess-kit-water-tubs; "jerry cans" became an essential part of everyone's equipment.

Transportation was the biggest headache. When we first arrived on the desert there was nothing. A few days later one Ford truck appeared and it did multiple duty for sanitation, mess, personnel, and ordinary communication between Group and the Squadron. Still later one jeep was added to the list and with these two vehicles the Squadron carried on all its activities, a feat which seemed impossible considering we were miles from civilization.

While the Squadron waited for the necessary equipment to begin training for desert warfare, Flying Skull pilots were farmed out to the 64th Squadron of the 57 Group, which had been operating in the desert since El Alamein in October. Captain Cimaglia was the first to fight with the 64th, and his first operational mission, a bomber escort, was from L. G. 174 on November 3, a few days after Montgomery began his historic push. To mix things up a bit, 25 ME-109's attacked his formation.

Indication of what the Axis was to expect, when the Flying Skull began operations, came when we received word that Lt. Sammy Say had drawn first blood for the entire Group in combat. While flying a fighter-bomber mission to Marble Arch in Lybia on December 8, the flight was attacked by 20 plus ME-109's; Lt. Say was credited with a "damaged". Flying Skull pilots flew a total of 103 sorties with the 64th, and gained invaluable experience in all desert warfare, dive bombing, strafing, bomber escort and fighter sweeps.

While some of our pilots were playing for keeps up towards the bomb line, back in the peaceful compounds of 174 a training program developed. Aircraft began to appear on the edges of the huge dusty field, and we were aided by experienced pilots of the 64th placed on temporary duty with the 85th. All departments in the Squadron operated under simulated combat conditions, enabling us to thrash out many difficult problems before actually becoming involved in combat.

Life at 174 was pleasant as well as instructive. An officer's club, with a bar made of the wings of an ME-

Alexandria Shore Drive



109 and walls decorated with excellent examples of Cpl. Joe Pumprey's art, was soon established. An enlisted men's PX and day room was kept reasonably well supplied by frequent trips to Alexandria. A day-off scedule was established for officers and men, and every afternoon a truck rolled out of the area for the big town. None will forget those days in Alexandria with its beer, steaks and ice cream at Monaco's and the Union Bar, hot showers and white sheets at the Cecil and Berkley House, French-speaking girls at Oreco's, shoe shine boys and "Finish Yankee"?

A baseball league was established with the 85th taking the honors. There were occasional movies and small English vaudeville troupes that played under the sky where we had choice seats with the whole desert floor to choose from. The "Flying Skull", squadron newspaper, came out with its first over-seas edition on New Year's day in the midst of a driving sandstorm.

As the winter wore on we began to doubt the stories of desert heat. The nights were unbelieveably cold, and everyone slept with three and four blankets. Early in the morning heavy wool jackets and sweater, gloves and frosty breath were customary in the breakfast chow line. Sandstorms were too frequent, and on the afternoon of January 3, a deceptively pleasant breeze whipped up a 57 mile per hour storm. During the night sand piled heavily on the sides of tents, and before dawn many of us had our homes down on our heads. The cooks did their best, but it was impossible to cook a meal, and we lived on sandy bully beaf and bread for two days, with a few welcome cups of coffee. Visibility was zero throughout the day and breathing was difficult in the driving yellow gale that lasted for 52 continuous hours. Several times during the fierce storms at 174, men on foot and in vehicles became lost and wandered in the desert for hours.

Early one evening in mid-December, a British Bomber, attempting to make a landing at a nearby field, crashed and burned a short distance from camp. Among the first men to reach the scene were S/Sgt Wilbert H. Holland, S/Sgt Leonard J. Bachetti, and S/Sgt Leslie J. Rogers, all of the 85th. These men broke into the nose of the burning ship and rescued the British bombardier trapped there, only a few scant seconds before the entire plane exploded in a mass of flame. For this act of heroism, the three men were awarded the Soldiers Medal by Major General Louis H. Brereton at a squadron formation several months later.

On the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays the army came through with an excellent meal. It will always be a mystery to us how it was done, but on November 25 we had turkey and all the fixin's. Although we had no airplanes, no trucks and no equipment with which to fight a war, we did have an American Thanksgiving dinner in the Egyptian Desert, and that made up for a lot.

Around the first of the year it began to be rumored that the Group would soon move into combat. Our organizational equipment, so carefully packed and crated in the US, had not yet arrived. We had 15 Warhawks, and several trips to the supply depot at Devisoir had brought enough trucks to make a move. Finally on the



*In the wake of the Desert warfare*

morning of Wednesday, January 20th, "A" party, composed of half of the personnel of each department, left 174 for LG 150 at Gazala, 30 miles west of the famed city of Tobruk. On January 23rd the Eighth Army marched into Tripoli and January 28th, "B" party moved out for El Gazala.

On the initial trip across the desert we had our first opportunity to see litter and wreckage of war strewn across the desert. From the barbed wire defenses of Alamein westward were blasted torn chassis of trucks and tanks, black skeletons of aircraft, huge piles of abandoned shells and ammunition, and lonely graves marked by crude crosses, stones, and battered helmets.

On the high rocky plateau at Gazala "A" party set up camp, but, due to the condition of the field, our planes were grounded. "B" party arrived January 31st, remained overnight and moved out in darkness the following morning. Up the line through Derna, Barce and Bengazhi we encountered a different kind of country, surprisingly green, with fertile valleys dotted with small Italian farms.

The rolling fields were covered with multi-colored wild flowers, and in the afternoon, after a hearty lunch of Spam and Hardtack, the scent of flowers almost lulled us to sleep.

West of Benghazi the convoy turned back into the desert and on February 6 passed through Mussolini's famous Marble Arch with an American flag flying at its base. Sunday February 7 the "B" Party trucks turned off the main tarmac road toward their final destination, Darraugh North Landing Ground, 60 miles south of Misurata. The convoy crawled through a blinding sandstorm, became lost on a rocky ledge but finally found its way to the field where we spent the first day sitting in our trucks waiting for the storm to subside.

Camp was set up, and the Squadron established for a three-week stay at a place that was a few hundred acres lifted from the floor of Hell. The planes arrived three days later but, for the duration of our stay, were grounded by sandstorms. On February 15, "A" party blew into the dust bowl. We floundered in ankle-deep dust, breathed and ate it for three weeks, and for the first time felt the pinch of water insufficient for our needs.

Everyone gave a great sigh of relief when "A" party was ordered to Castel Benito on February 23. "B" party happily followed two days later, camped about 25 miles north of Darraugh and after supper were ordered back, a few days later they were reprieved and re-joined "A" party at Castel Benito, Mussolini's monumental airdrome 15 miles south of Tripoli. A graveyard of Axis aircraft and the twisted hangars attested to the might of Allied bombers. For several nights there was an Axis

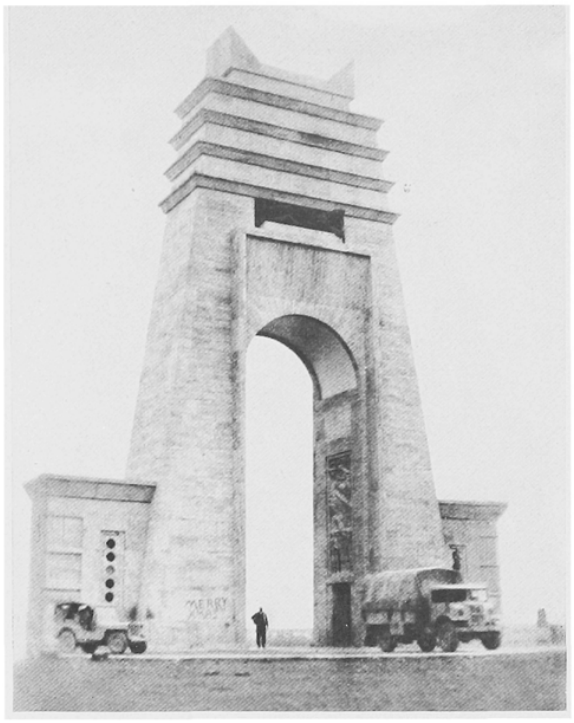
show over Tripoli Harbor the red tracers of ack-ack searing a pattern in the black sky. The British had chased the "Fox" Rommel behind the Mareth line in Southern Tunisia and we knew the day was not too far off when the Flying Skull pilots would join the offensive against the Axis.

March 11, "A" party left Castel Benito for Causeway landing ground located on a smooth tidal flat about 10 miles north of the small Arab town of Zarzis. At 1525 hours on April 14, a few hours after camp had been set up, 12 Warhawks of the Flying Skull roared off the field on the Squadrons' first operational mission. Led by Major Schoellkopf, they escorted 17 Mitchells to tomb enemy installations in the Mareth area. Lt. Say, who drew first blood for the Group while with the 57th, chalked up another first with considerable less relish. His was the first squadron aircraft to be damaged by ack-ack.

In the succeeding weeks we had a steady diet of bomber escort, and our pilots established a reputation by not losing a bomber to enemy aircraft. On our third mission, a bomber escort, the Skullmen had their first brush with the Luftwaffe. Lt. Simpson put over 1,000 rounds into an ME-109 and received credit for a damaged.

Every night at Causeway we could hear the rumble of heavy guns and see ominous flashes in the sky towards the Mareth line. On several occasions ack-ack guns on the field pounded in the middle of the night, sending us diving into slit trenches. Several times enemy aircraft dropped flares nearby but no bombs were dropped on our field.

Swimming was wonderful when we found time. The



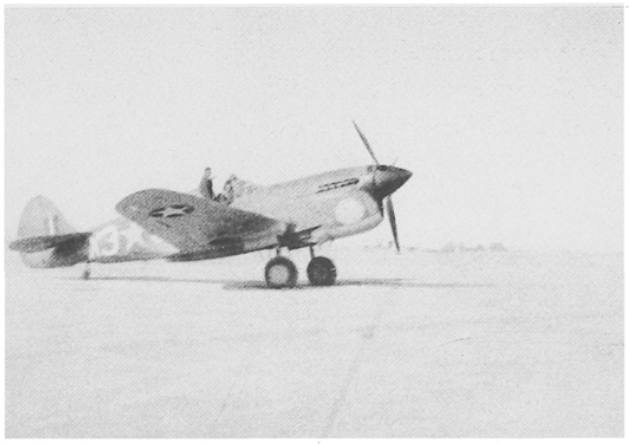
*Marble Arch, Tripolitania*

sulphur spring in a palm-studded Arab oasis was a popular watering spot in the evening when operations ceased. Some of us visited the island of Jerba, across the narrow channel.

American forces were steadily moving toward the coast in Southwestern Tunisia, and Montgomery continued a hopeless frontal assault on the Mareth line. Tactics changed and on the morning of March 21st the New Zealanders began their famous flanking movement, hoping to create a pocket between El Hamma and the sea and force Rommel to retreat from Mareth. After



*Wreckage at Castel Benito*



*Warhawk at Causeway*

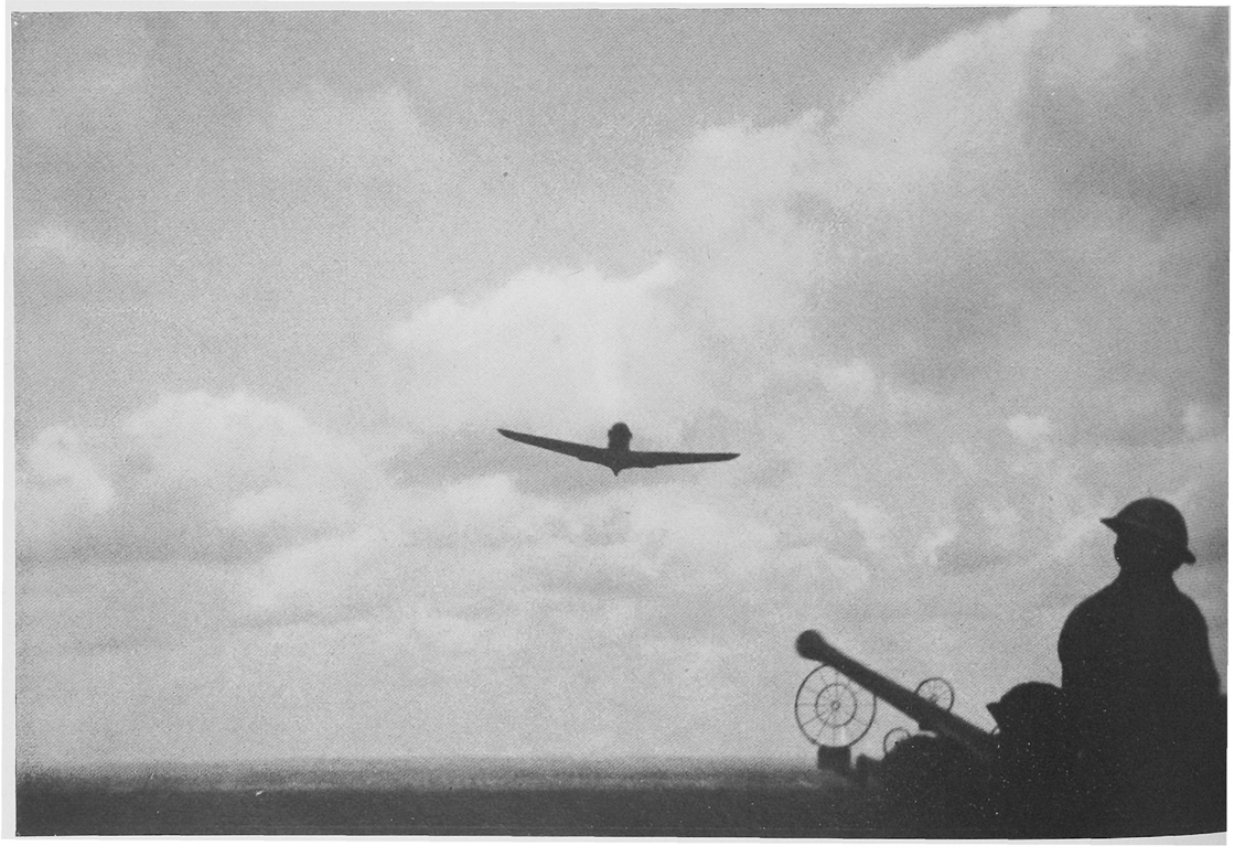


"Briefing" A Desert Mission




Convoy Halt, Tunisia

Falcon warhawk in first-light take-off over British Ack-Ack Position

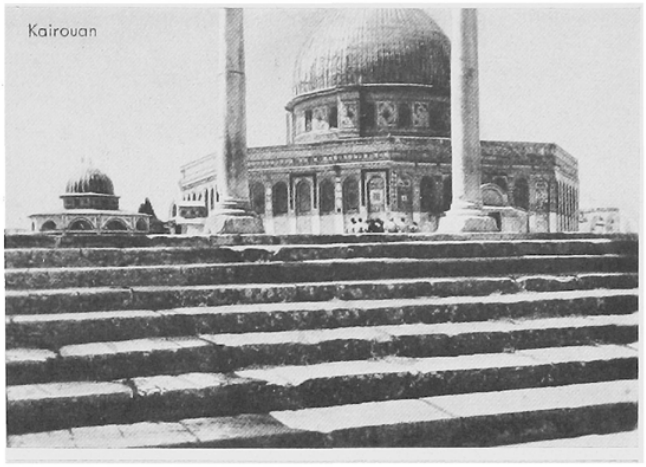


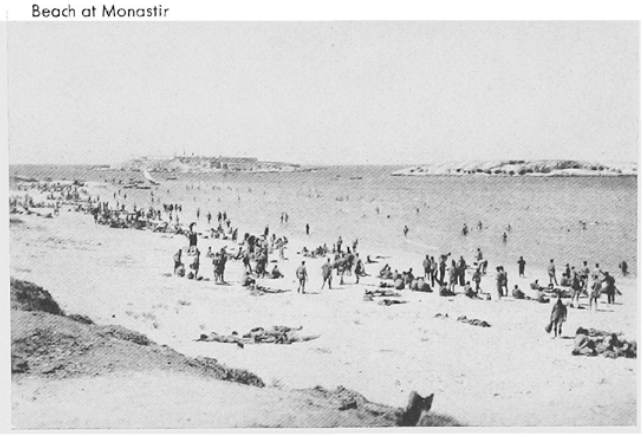
three days of fierce fighting below El Hamma the British drive had been halted. On the 25th, the squadron had its first strafing mission in the area east of Sfax. On March 26 the Squadron took part in a close land support action which was credited with shortening the Tunisian campaign by three weeks. In the El Hamma sector Jerry was strongly entrenched in hills southeast of the town and had completely halted the New Zealanders. Personally briefed by Group Commander Jackie Darwin of the RAF, the Group took on the job of blasting open a path by strafing and bombing the narrow steep valley. The "show" was a complete success, and the New Zealanders stormed into El Hamma forcing the Afrika Korps to withdraw from the Mareth Line. Optimism was rampant, and we fully expected Montgomery to drive up the coast to Sfax and Sousse, but the wary "Fox" gathered his forces for a stand at Wadi Akarit, north of Gabes. For the Group's contribution in the El Hamma attack we shared in a commendation addressed to all participating units by General Montgomery.

"A" party left on a two-hour notice April 8, and "B" party followed a few days later, making the trip at night in total blackout. Fauconnerie, atop a high grassy plateau, overlooking mile upon mile of olive orchards, was occupied by the 79th only a few days after Jerry had hurried out. Mines were still being exploded when we arrived, and four German soldiers were found roving in the neighborhood. Our pilots had only five missions from Fauconnerie, four of them ship escorts. The quick advance had left us out of operational range.

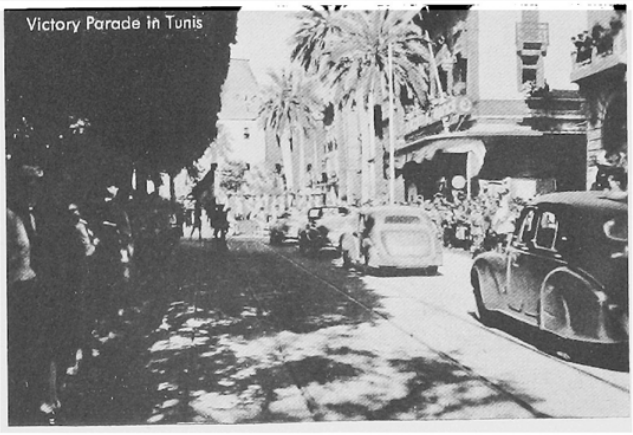
April 17, "B" party moved out for Hanu West LG, a few miles east of the Holy Mosleum city of Kairouan. Here the Squadron experienced its most intensive period of operations, putting 62 missions in the air in 36 days. From our first mission on April 18 to our last of the African campaign on May 11, we had only one day without operations. The atmosphere here was more pleasant, the town having some suggestion of Europe in the buildings and streets. We visited many mosques at Kairouan and ogled the very few French girls in town. Trucks went to the beach at Monastir daily, and movies were shown twice a week.

The Squadron's first big "circus" took place in late afternoon, May 8, when 20 plus ME-109's and FW-190's jumped our 12-ship top cover to the 87th Squadron. Our total bag was four aircraft, without loss to ourselves. Capt. Say got his second confirmed ME-109, Lt. Hoag-


Kairouan


Beach at Monastir


"Wagging"


Victory Parade in Tunis



*Malta*

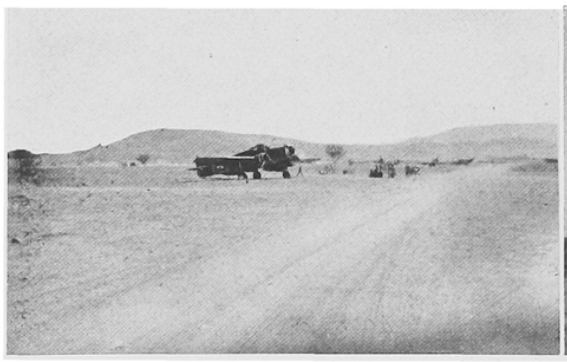
land destroyed one ME-109, and Lt. Hale destroyed an ME-109 and a Feisler Storch. Perhaps more important was the pounding we gave to enemy shipping in Sicily Straits and Gulf of Tunis. Evacuation attempts were in full swing and we were credited with direct hits on two 5,000 ton merchant vessels and on a patrol boat. In co-operation with other squadrons we shared in the destruction of a destroyer. The 85th's last mission of the Tunisian campaign was a fighter bomber show against the evacuation beaches at Didi Douad on the west coast of Cape Bon the day prior to the German capitulation, May 11, 1943.

At dusk on May 12 word came through that the last of the Afrika Korps had laid down its guns in the hills west of Enfidaville. The night sky was filled with signal flares, and ack-ack and small arms banged away to celebrate the victory. We all relaxed, and during the following ten days took life easy with a few ship escort missions. All personnel took off for the high hills and indulged in an orgy of "wogging" after the defeat. Jerry and Italian trucks, motorcycles, guns, ammunition and equipment of all sorts began to pile in the area; even a medium Italian tank made its appearance. We visited the cities of Tunis, Carthage and points west and marvelled at the thousands of Axis prisoners jamming the roads back.

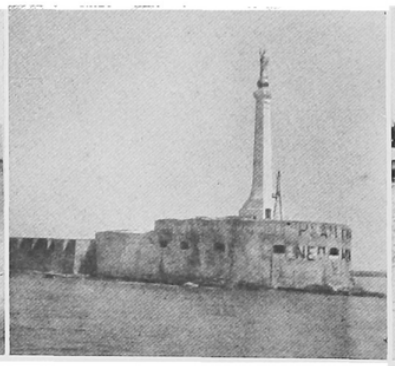
Rumors flew thick and fast, with intriguing talk of "commando training" for "A" party. In the midst of speculation "B" party moved out for El Haouaria LG on the northern-most tip of Cape Bon hills and on June 4th had our first mission over Pantelleria. At 1300 on June 11, we escorted the last 12 Baltimores over the island, and two hours later it surrendered without a shot being fired by the invaders. The Squadron had accounted for nine enemy aircraft destroyed, one probable, and one damaged over the island. The 85th now led the group in enemy aircraft destroyed with a total of 16.

After the surrender of Pantelleria "A" party left Hani West for Bou Grara LG near our old base at Causeway. "B" party started the trek back down the desert road on June 14, by-passed Bou Grara, and set up camp at Causeway again, after an absence of two months. The ever present "Wogs" cheered as the convoy wormed its way through the narrow streets of Zarzis, and we found our old L. G. as we had left it. Packed and alerted for a move to points unknown, "A" party arrived from Bou Grara on June 16. An advance party left Causeway on June 26 and the balance of "A" party rolled out towards Tripoli July 2d.

The following four weeks at Causeway were the most difficult in the desert career of the 85th. We cursed the inactivity, boredom, stifling heat and the flies. The invasion of Sicily on July 10 and meager news reports only served to whet our appetites for action. There was a bit of excitement late in June when it was reported that paratroopers had perhaps landed in the vicinity. We patrolled, and searched the Arabs without results. On July 19 the Squadron's "wog" dog, who had been



*Palagonia L G*



*Messina Jettee*



*Italian Barracks at Isola L. G.*

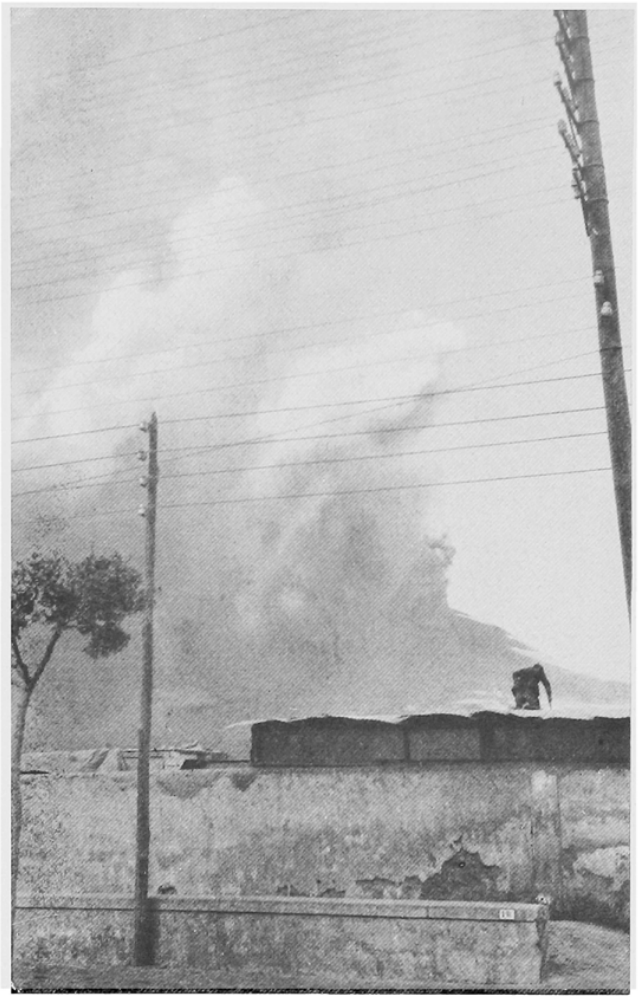
with us since 174, and who had been AWOL since "A" party left Bou Grara, turned up at camp dusty and decrepit. She took to the tail timber whenever the squadron moved, being highly allergic to motor convoys. How she ever found her way across 30 miles of desert to rejoin the outfit was beyond mere human understanding.

Joyfully, "B" party moved to the Tripoli marshalling yards July 25, boarded ship on the 26th, became seasick on the 27th and landed in Syracuse, Sicily on the 28th. "A" party arrived in Sicily on July 17 after having spent two weeks on the Island of Malta. These were a pleasant two weeks with visits to the picturesque Maltese towns and the appreciation of more civilized pursuits, dances at Rockydale, movies, beer, and swimming in St. Paul's Bay.

Sicily was a change. After the drab monotony of the Tunisian and Lybian deserts, the green trees and hills, vineyards packed with grapes, good roads and almost modern cities gave us all a lift in spirits. Jerry staged a celebration over the harbor of Syracuse almost every night while we were stationed at Cassibile LG, a few miles south of the city. No orders were necessary to get slit trenches dug, and for the first time they were used for something other than convenient garbage dumps. Fifteen minutes after "B" party arrived at Cassibile on July 23, a lone ME-109 strafed the field, causing no damage but sending everyone into the nearest ditch.

On July 30 "B" party moved out for Palagonia LG, located in a narrow valley about 40 miles southwest of Catania. The vague outline of Mount Etna was visible in the North. The scenery through the mountains was unexcelled, but the twisting steep roads had dire effects on our weatherbeaten old trucks. For the first time transport planes were used to move part of the Squadron, crew chiefs and tentage being flown into the new field. The Group opened enlisted men's and officer's clubs in the nearby city of Caltigirone. The 85th had a day room built from a pre-fabricated German building, and the officers took over a small stone house for their club. Movies were shown in a natural amphitheater on the side of a hill. An Italian stage show, formerly from Catania, also played to the Group.

Sicily fell on August 17, and the Eight Army crossed the Straits of Messina September 3, a move that was a surprise to most of us, despite the very obvious preparations. September 13, "A" party left Palagonia to embark for the mainland, and two days later arrived at Isola LG, located on high ground 15 miles southwest of Crotone on the toe of Italy.



*British Engineers were still blasting out a runway for us at Firmo*

For the first time since the states, we were quartered in barracks. The field had been an Italian and German base, and the enemy had left unused new barracks, half completed administration buildings and hangars. It was a real treat to live under something other than canvas, but, as with most good things, it didn't last long. "B" party stayed at Isola only a few days, then left for a new field, about 50 miles north of Cozenza. Firmo LG was surrounded by hills, and camp was set up in an orchard. The field was not completed, and engineers were still blowing up trees.

Only two fighter bomber missions were run from Firmo, and "A" party bypassed the field, arriving at Pisticci LG. 40 miles south of Taranto, on September 23. The day "B" party left Firmo, Major Schoellkopf, our



*Red Cross "Coffee and —" At Foggia*

commanding officer, boarded a DC-3 bound for Tunis, and eventually the United States. An excellent executive and a steady competent pilot with an unlimited knowledge of aviation and aircraft, Major Schoellkopf had led the squadron since it had been formed as a complete fighting unit. His place was taken by Major Frank B. Wagner, West Point graduate, and assistant group operations officer. Major Wagner had flown with the squadron since operations began. Lt. Taylor became "ops" officer.

Pisticci, set in the middle of a wide flat plain, was reminiscent of Hani West. Only three missions were run from this field, and the Squadron packed up for the fourth move in two weeks. This time it was "A" party to Pennypost L. G., 15 miles east of Foggia.

Pennypost, when we arrived on October 1, was liberally sprinkled with mines and booby traps, and we all trod lightly during our week's stay.

"A" party left Pennypost October 4, bound for the San Severo L. G., northeast of Foggia. They spent the night floundering in the mud and rain and were then ordered to Foggia no. 3, eight miles west of Foggia.

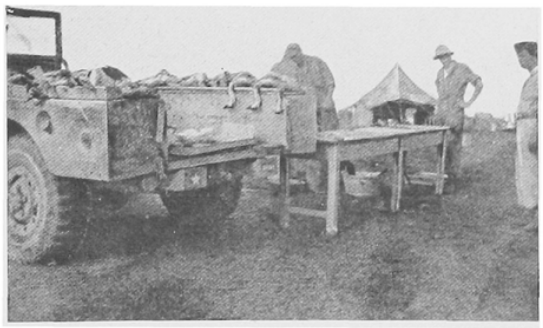
Foggia was a ghost city, not one building unscarred or undamaged by bursting bombs. We requisitioned furniture for the dayroom and officer's club, and good stocks of wine and champagne were available in nearby towns. The weather was growing cold, and we availed ourselves of sturdy iron stoves conveniently left behind for us by Jerry.

From the date of our arrival in Italy on September 15, to our move to Foggia on October 9, we had moved five times and traveled over 300 miles up into Italy. Italian civilians cheered as we passed through their crowded, jumbled towns and threw grapes and fruit into our trucks from the roadsides. The city of Bari looked good to us with wide clean streets, trolley buses and relatively well stocked stores. Enlisted men were given five-day leaves to Manfredonia, Bari, and Sorrento. This was the first time overseas that leaves were granted to the men.

Operations slowed down during the last three weeks of our stay at Foggia no. 3, now re-named Salsola landing ground. Weather began to play an important role in our operational status, with many two and three day "Stand- Downs". November 12 marked the first anniversary of our landing at Port Tewfik, Egypt. One year's operation had seen the Flying Skull develop from a green outfit to a seasoned unit with a record of which every man was proud. We celebrated by carrying our first 1,000 lb. bombs, and dropping them on a "Jerry" headquarters in Central Italy.

In the middle of the month ground personnel from a bomber outfit began to move in on us; engineers began to work around the field, and we knew a move was in the offing. In the midst of rain, mud and darkness, early on the morning of November 19, the advance party moved out to Madna L. G., 10 miles south of Termoli. "B" party followed three days later, but our planes were kept on the ground, bogged down in the mud.

We ate turkey on turkey day and reflected on the previous Thanksgiving Day in the desert. A party was planned but had to be called off because of weather and the general state of disorganization in which every



*Thanksgiving Turkey — Madna L. G.*



*Capodichino Apartments*



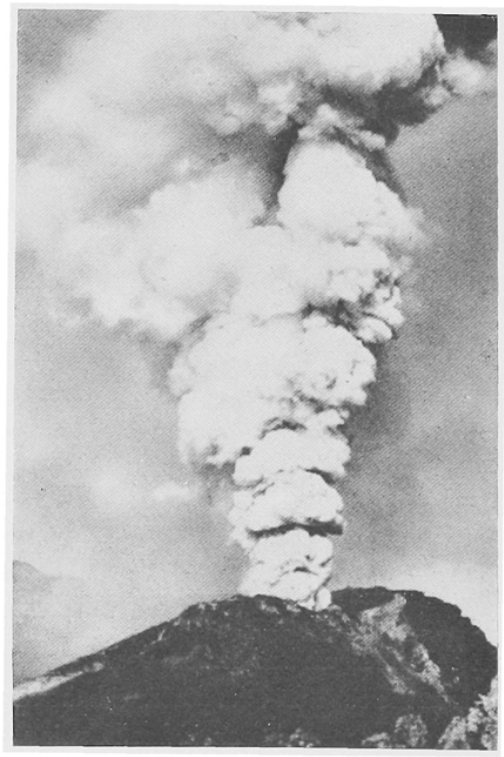
*After a year of Faithful Service the P-40's were retired at Capodichino, in the Shadow —*

move found us. Each tent was rationed a couple of bottles of wine or brandy instead, and everyone had his own private party. A number of G. I. pyramidal tents were issued, replacing many of the old 180 lb. British tents we had used for over a year. Our camp began to look less English and more American. The Squadron's own Xmas cards, printed in Bari, arrived and departed by the mailbag-full, much to the dismay of the censoring officers.

Operations from Madna L. G. during December were sporadic due to weather. We had our third commanding officer appointed on December 24, when Captain John F. Martin assumed command. Captain Martin was one of the Squadrons original pilots, popular and well-liked, and had been assistant group operations officer since September.

No missions from December 23 to 28 due to weather, and we were able to appreciate the Xmas holiday to the fullest. There were turkey dinners for Xmas and New Years. On both occasions the Officers and Enlisted men celebrated in their clubs, finishing off good stocks of wine, brandy and cognac. The camp had achieved a sort of permanency and we had begun to accept it as our "winter quarters". An Italian civilian was hired to build stone fire places for the officers and enlisted men's clubs; wooden doors and floors were built in personal tents, and a steel Neisen hut was built on the line as a pilot's alert room.

On the 11th of January 1944 our Squadron flew the Group's 1000th mission. A few days later "A" party set out for Capodichino L. G. at Naples, Italy to assist in a special operation. They moved into a large modern apartment building which set a new high for their standard of living. The only real drawbacks were lack of heat in the living quarters and the Italian civilians that



*— of Vesuvius*



*Our new ship – the P-47 – was dubbed "the flying Milk-Bottle"*

continuously thronged around the mess, each with a tin can hoping it would be filled with food headed for the gargage can.

The Anzio beach-head, for which we provided continued cover, turned out to be the reason for our move. Encounters with enemy aircraft became almost a daily occurence with the results greatly in our favor.

At the beginning of February the overseas alert, under which the Squadron was then sweating, was lifted, to the universal relief of all. Shortly afterwards the Squadron received three P-47's for "checking out" the pilots for a change-over.

Up until now "B" party was still on the other side of Italy, but after two days of rugged travel they rejoined the Squadron to marvel at the luxury. A snack bar was established on the line where coffee and graham crackers became a 1000 hr. institution. Cocacola also appeared for the first time in the P. A. rations, and beer, which was generally conceded to be the best yet discovered overseas.

On March 8th the Squadron flew its last operational mission in the old desert Warhawk. In less than a week it could mark the completion of a full year of combat duty. Already we had come a very long way. We had entered the conflict in the desert with the result hanging in the balance and seen it finally swing over to the greater weight of our arms. We had invaded Sicily and Italy and crossed the peninsula to cover a third invasion. It had been a full year.

The first Squadron dance took place in an Italian night-club. The campaign was mapped with thought and care. Members of the opposite sex were decoyed in by various means, and a certain degree of success was achieved. At month's end, we were treated to a fullfledged eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, its best display in 80 years. Two other Groups were forced off their fields, due to the continuous bombardment of lava and ash, and moved in on us. Practically all available motor transportation in the Naples area could be found on the mountainside where people had gone to inspect this phenomenon at first hand.

Baseball had been flourishing for the past two months under an organized league. The new P-47 aircraft were being steadily employed in dive-bomb attacks on enemy gun positions and communication lines and were occasionally tangling with the enemy in the air. The margin of superiority over Jerry that we had already established was consistently maintained.

Mid-April saw an advance party set out for Marcianese landing ground a few miles to the north where they set up a camp. As the rest of the unit were preparing to join "A" party a week later, the move was can-

celled. A squadron dance scheduled for the same night augmented the activity. Jerry then cooperated in rounding out a busy day by sending over 40 or more bombers in a raid on our air-field. We answered with a complete blackout that in no way impaired the success of the dance. A few bombs on the runway with none of our planes hit was the only damage to our Group, while the other side of the field suffered loss of a few aircraft. This was the last intense raid by enemy aircraft witnessed by the Group.

We reassembled both parties at Pomigliano near Naples, Marcianese being found unsuitable. We again established in buildings, even better off than before since there were fewer stairs to climb. The first few days were spent in a terrific cleaning campaign. Once this was done to meet official approval, the enlisted men opened their club with a flourish of gin, brandy and a two-piece band.

May 12th at 2300 was the zero hour for the big break through at Cassino. Our main duty was to continue the patrols of the Anzio beach-head which we had been maintaining since late January but we were to be called upon to contribute further in an effort to cut enemy supply lines. This entire campaign was to be correlated with the impending "second front" and the Russian successes. As part of our contribution to the offensive we put up 60 aircraft in four missions on the 24th. On this same day the entire group dropped 160 tons of bombs on the enemy. Operations continued throughout the month at this same pace. The pilots performed superbly in completing their missions under weather conditions frequently unfavorable. Ground crew personnel are equally deserving of praise for the consistently fine job of maintenance they did in keeping a maximum number of aircraft on continual readiness. Such little leisure as could be found was spent in baseball where the enlisted men again demonstrated their mastery over the officers, although the latter were beginning to show some signs of improvement.

The beginning of June saw our troops at the gates of Rome, but our effort in the air had not lessened. The war was making real progress. On June 5 the enlisted men celebrated our recent successes by opening their normal by candlelight. The next morning we were met by the long awaited news of the invasion of northern France. The touching D-day message from President Roosevelt was heard by all members of the organization.

Little else was discussed in the days immediately following the channel crossing other than the successes of our troops. All personnel remained close to the radio and maps were studied with the closest detail. Then our attention was recalled to our own theatre by the news that an air echelon was to operate from Corsica for some ten days. A frenzy of packing and crating ensued in order to ready "A" party for the move. Within a few days "B" party was surprised to find itself also located on the island. Our effort was immediately directed against the Isle of Elba in support of a French invasion.

Our base was the Serragia landing ground, a converted vineyard, 20 miles south of Bastia. Tents were pitched in a grove of cork trees. The men set to work with great energy providing the minor amenities of life. Washstands, showers and slit trenches were constructed as well as a loudspeaker hook-up that afforded regular news and music throughout the area. Operations continued steadily, and during June we received the Distinguished Unit Citation from General "Uncle Joe" Cannon.

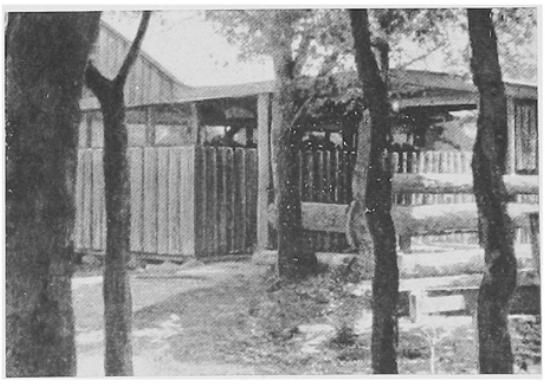
July continued our part in "Operation Strangle"



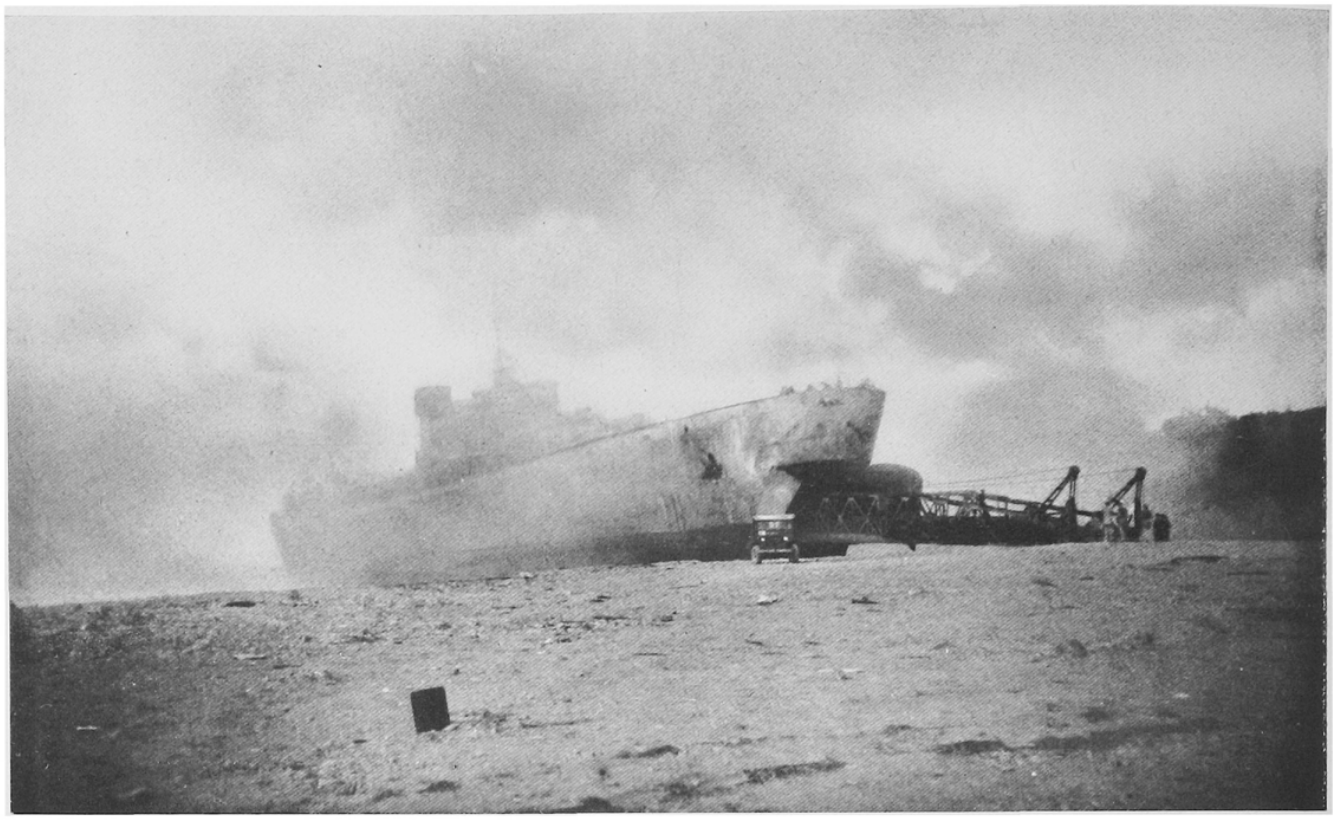
*Pomigliano Apartments*



*Corsica Camp-Ground*



*Officers' Club at Serragia, Corsica*



*Landing at San Raphael*

with all strength concentrated on denying supply routes to the enemy. There was little rest for either pilots or men except when weather gave us an occasional break. Life in Corsica could never be termed exciting. Some of the more energetic would occasionally manage to get into Bastia, the only place even closely resembling a city. We were forced upon our own resources. The officers erected a club that still stands as the high point in constructive ingenuity for the group. Fashioned from logs and bamboo, screened in and provided with tables and the interior decorated completely by a suspended parachute, it attracted admiring visitors from near and far. We leveled a ball diamond that received pretty steady use.

During July one of the Squadron's most successful missions was flown. A joint fighter sweep with the 87th Squadron against the Valence Airdrome took a terrific toll of enemy aircraft. Many ships were destroyed on the ground and many more severely damaged. But not until we later moved to this airfield did we realize how conservative our original estimate of the destruction had been. Gradually our missions were reaching out further and further in search of targets.

Our ships continued their attacks on enemy airfields making a particularly successful raid into Northern Italy. There was, however, something more important in store. A secret mission was on the fire. "Dry runs" were held with the aircraft practicing night take-offs. On the morning of August 15th in the thick darkness the landing ground was a scene of feverish activity. By an all out effort the ground crews had every one of our 26 aircraft assigned, ready to go. The flames from 100 P-47's exhausts provided an eerie glow. A similar scene was being enacted at every field on the island for this was the air cover for the invasion of Southern France.

From its earliest moments this invasion was characterized by its success. Resistance was scattered, but that in no way lessened our responsibility to continue to harass the enemy wherever he could be found. Again the Squadron was divided as an advance echelon set out for France to prepare for the arrival of planes. The rest of the unit followed soon in two British LST's which dropped us on the beaches of St. Raphael.

With no more than the usual amount of confusion and wrong turns, we finally located our new base. Scarcely had we settled ourselves before the rumor started that we were to advance again. The battle was going so fast it was a common occurence for the pilots to be

unable to find the enemy. Moves, however, had lost all novelty to the Squadron by now. It mattered little if the order were to come in a few hours or a few weeks, the men could adapt themselves accordingly. The new situation was reminiscent of Corsica but instead of cork trees and dust we had pines with a carpet of needles underfoot.

We sensed at once that France was to be a great improvement over Corsica. The men lost no time making friends in nearby towns and the Riviera district was thoroughly covered. The military situation was confusing, with isolated pockets of resistance scattered throughout the area. A rest camp was established at Cannes while the Germans still held Nice a few miles away. The beaches were inviting but all were posted with signs proclaiming "Achtung minen". Although the countryside seemed fresh and prosperous with very few traces of war, abandoned equipment was common and the smell of death was often encountered.



*Valence*

During the first week in September the enemy seemed to have drawn out of range so again we resumed pursuit. Our new home was to be the airdrome at Valence, France, objective of one of our most destructive raids of only a month before. As we travelled up the Rhone Valley the destructive powers of fighter bombers became apparent with a grim clarity that none of us had ever fully realized. For a distance of roughly 30 miles, centered on the little town of Montelimar, was a shambles that may well have had no counterpart in this war. Here there had been created a bottle-neck of traffic, lined bumper to bumper, that had been ceaselessly attacked for days on end. Vehicles of every description were blocking each other until all fell victims to allied



*Road to Montelimar*

air power. There were great diesel buses such as once were used for passengers on the streets of Berlin, there were tanks and horse drawn carts, there was in actuality everything that would move on wheels, and all were now abandoned in flight. Only the odor of decaying bodies, animal and human, remained to connect this spectacle with the part it had once played for the retreating Wehrmacht. The debris had been cleaned from the road to the ditches alongside by a bull-dozer which was still thus occupied as we hurried on northward.

Valence airdrome was a huge sprawling affair that seemed to extend for miles. Here again we saw evidence of what attack from the air can mean. Although we knew it had been a brilliantly executed maneuver, we were not prepared to find revetment after revetment filled with disabled ships that never again took off after our visit. Operations here were greatly restricted by



*Valence*

weather. In the middle of the month "A" party departed for Lyon which was to prove to be the high point of the overseas life. We established ourselves in the suburb of Bron near the airdrome. The enlisted men erected their camp in the village park where they lived under the continual curious stares of the local citizenry. The officers moved into houses evacuated by the Germans a few days previous.

The all too brief stay in Lyon was a memorable one for the townspeople made us most welcome. Americans were a real novelty at that time. Continuing bad weather kept operations at a minimum so that everyone had ample opportunity to enjoy the first large European city we had been in since Naples. The experience of "B" party was tragic, for they never joined us. Languishing back at Valence they were suddenly ordered to Septemes staging area near Marseilles. Rumors of this catastrophe had leaked through to the others at Lyon, but they refused to believe until they too found themselves strung out in the familiar convoy form, southward bound. Never in our stay overseas was a place left with more regret, but the American 7th Army, whom we were supporting, now had more air cover than they needed and our ships were required elsewhere. So we left France with happy memories and a goodly array of "scrounged" vehicles.

Several tiresome days were spent at Marseilles as we went through the confusion and delays, of staging and loading for Italy, the country from which we seemed unable to escape. An advance party was carried to Italy in C-47's while the remainder traveled by American LST's, a relatively pleasant trip. Food was good and two days of idleness were welcome. Little enthusiasm was shown as we sailed into Leghorn harbor. Italy was no novelty to us and the prospect of another winter here was looked upon with foreboding.

Some new motor equipment was issued to us here and after a day or so we again strung out in convoy for the trip across the mountains. Again we were to be with the British Eighth Army our old companion of desert days, but under very different circumstances. When before the blowing sand had been the chief annoyance, we now coped with mud. Our field was Jesi, some 15 miles inland from the Adriatic. We arrived at the start of the rainy season and, for two months, mud was our daily "diet". Half the transportation was in continuous use pulling the other half out. From time to time one area or another would be completely under water. Finally we yielded and moved to the crest of a hill a mile away. As usual, by the time we had readapted ourselves and achieved a degree of comfort, we again received orders to move.

Still in pursuit of the same enemy we pushed up the coast to Fano. The enlisted men were well housed in a series of stone cabins, part of Mussolini's better-housing program. Far from luxurious by American standards, the men with their usual resourcefulness soon had them in very creditable shape. Stoves were installed for the winter. The officers had sent pilots ahead to select quarters. With an eye for grandeur rather than the necessities of fighting a war they commandeered a villa out in the country, ignoring the fact that the area was liberally mined. The situation was studied in the cold light of operational requirements until finally a so-called palace was secured in the heart of the city, only a few minutes from the airfield.



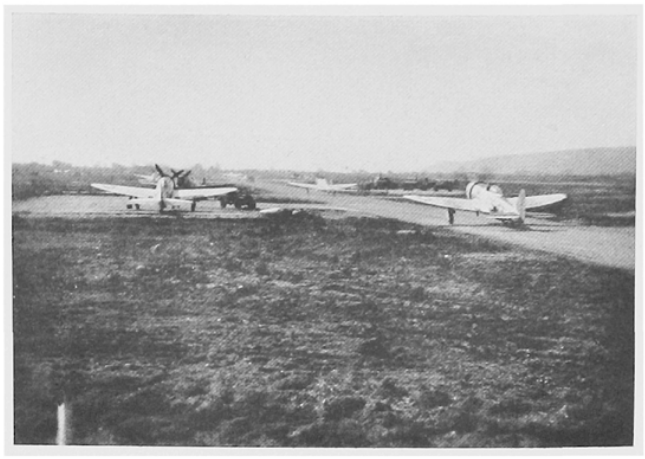
*Mua at Jesi, Italy*

Ironically, after all our traveling, we were on exactly the same coast as we had been just a year before at Madna, Except a couple of hundred miles farther up the peninsula. The over-all military picture had taken a great turn for the better, but the relatively slight progress made in this theatre was proof of the bitter contest. Our aircraft divided their efforts between Yugoslavia and Northern Italy. During the month of January, the Squadron commander, Major Earl P. Maxwell, led the 1000th mission to be flown in less than 2 years of actual operations.

February came and went as we continued relentless pressure on the enemy.



*Enlisted billets, Fano*



*Fano dispersal area*

In late March we moved to the beach-resort town of Cesenatico, once again close to the front. One feature of the new life was considered revolutionary in the extreme. All officers were housed, and fed as a group in one hotel. Some of the more conservative viewed this with foreboding, feeling that the keen inter-squadron rivalry might break out into open warfare. Actually their fears proved groundless, the only possible drawback being a shortage of bar-tenders on party nights. The enlisted men were originally lodged in tents on the beach, but it was soon decided that the area made far too inviding a target for an intruding enemy plane. Buildings were procured for living quarters and a club, where the familiar Flying Skull again appeared by the door.

Here at Cesenatico we were engaged in the most active phase of operations within our experience. Acting in close support of the British Eighth Army we were to take part in the final endeavor to mop up German resistance in this theatre. On the morning of April 9 Colonel Pinkston, Group Commander, explained the situation to all personnel. He outlined just what was in prospect and what our part would be. For days to follow there would be little leisure for anyone. As has so consistently been the case, everyone responded magnificently. Records of many kinds were established as we ceaselessly pounded the foe. Enemy strong points were liquidated, supply lines constantly strafed and the close support of on rushing ground forces was at high level. Time and again Army commanders called in congradulations for the type of work we were doing. The end of our long journey was in sight. It was to be here in the Po Valley that we were to finally finish the enemy that we had so steadily pursued for two and one half years.

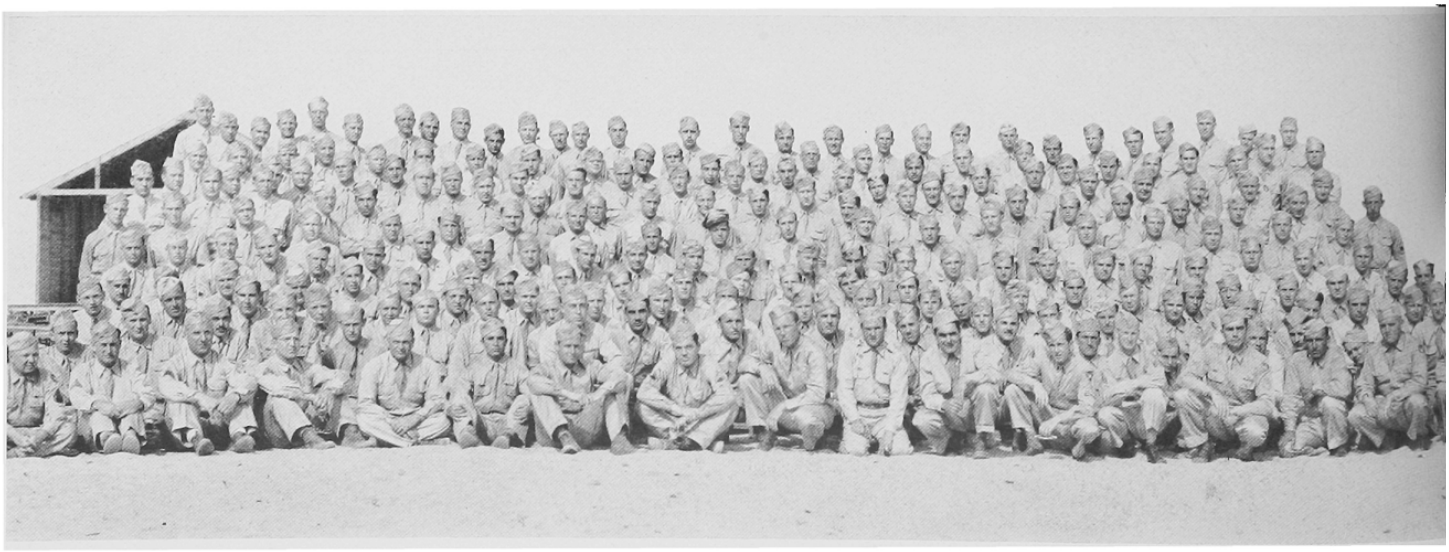


*Living area, Cesenatico*



*Cesenatico air-strip*

On May 1 we heard the long awaited news: "The German forces in Italy surrender unconditionally". We flew a few patrols to be certain that resistance had ceased, but for us the war here was over. Our last and final job was completed with the professional skill perfected in the long months of operations.

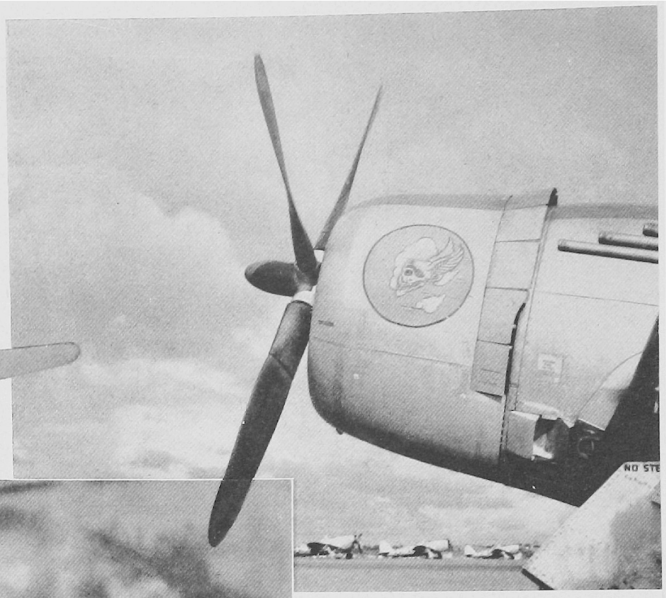


*As we looked at the wind-up Cesenatico, May 1945*

# Our Fighting Ships



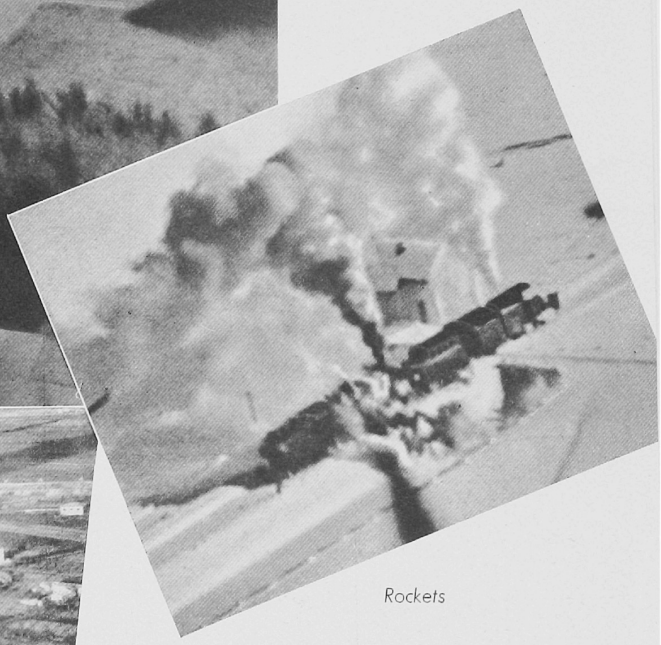
**P-40**
March 1943 to
March 1944



**P-47**
March 1944 to May 1945

Strafing





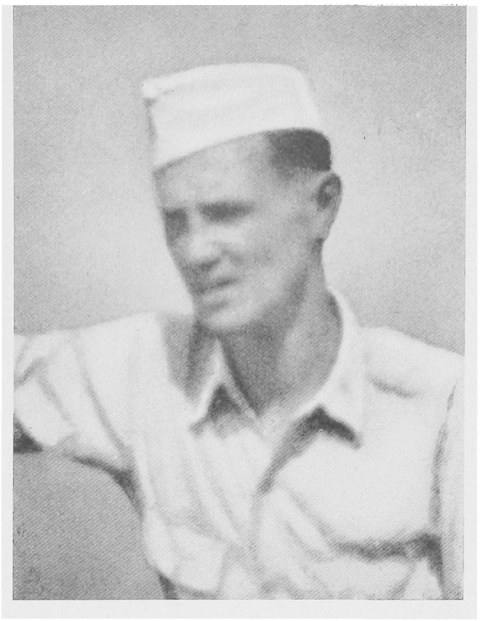
Rockets



Dive Bombing

## and how they fought

# 85TH SQUADRON COMMANDERS



MAJ. JACOB F. SCHOELLKOPF
Buffalo, N.Y.
74 Missions
D.F.C.; Air Medal and 4 OLC's



MAJ. FRANK B. WAGNER
St. Petersburg, Fla.
94 Missions
D.F.C.; Purple Heart; Air Medal and 6 OLC's



LT. COL. JOHN F. MARTIN
Culpepper, Va.
200 Missions
Silver Star; D.F.C. and 3 OLC's; Soldiers Medal; Air Medal and 13 OLC's; Bronze Star; British D.F.C. and 1 Bar



MAJ. CARL W. STEWART
Morgantown, W.Va.
123 Missions
D.F.C. and OLC; Air Medal and 5 OLC's

# 85TH SQUADRON COMMANDERS



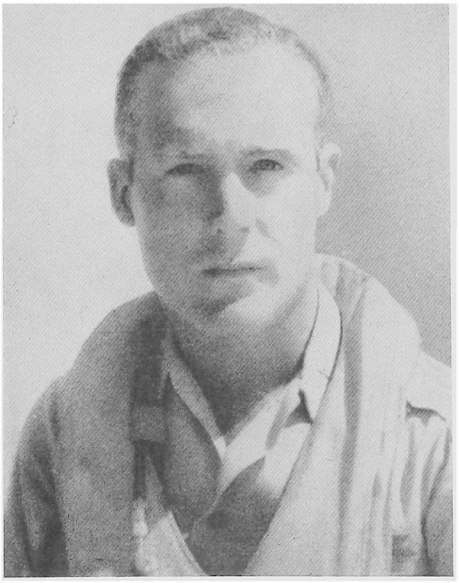
MAJ. EUGENE L. KLEIDERER, JR.
Montgomery, Ala.
91 Missions
D. F. C., Air Medal and 5 OLC's



MAJ. EARL P. MAXWELL
St. Charles, Mo.
130 Missions
D. F. C. and OLC; Air Medal and 5 OLC's



LT. COL. ROGER B. FILES
Los Angeles. Calif.
102 Missions
Silver Star; D. F. C. and OLC; Air Medal and 4 OLC's;
British D. F. C.



CAPT. EDWIN J. PAYNE
Weslaco, Texas
102 Missions
D. F. C.; Air Medal and 4 OLC's

# IN MEMORIAM

## KILLED IN ACTION

2nd LT.
GEORGE W. BEERS
FT. WAYNE
IND.



MAJ. EDWARD J. BYRON
New York City, N.Y.

1st LT.
CHARLES
W. DEFOOR, JR.
FT. MEYERS, FLA.
91 MISSIONS



2nd LT. GLENN W. FAULKNER
Weslaco, Texas
45 Missions

2nd LT.
JAMES L. GREEN
CLEVELAND, OHIO
1 MISSION



1st LT. WILLIAM C. GLASGOW
Niagara Falls, N. Y.
80 Missions

2nd LT.
WILLIAM
L. HARDING
OMAHA, NEBR.
7 MISSIONS



2nd LT. RAYMOND L. HIGGINS
Gladwyne, Pa.
48 Missions

2nd LT.
ERNEST
H. KELLERMAN
WEEHAWKEN, N. J.
35 MISSIONS



1st LT. GEORGE E. KEPPLER
Pasadena, Cal.
34 Missions



1st LT. JAMES H. Mc HENRY
Niagara Falls, N. Y.
68 Missions



1st LT. ARCHIBALD G. Mc ILWAINE
Meyers Mill, S. C.
32 Missions

2nd LT.
WILLIAM A. MARTIN
SELINA, ALA.
4 MISSIONS



2nd LT. WILLIAM B. MARSHALL
Parkersberg, W.Va.
41 Missions

2nd LT.
VINCENT I. MILLICAN
DILLSBORO, IND.
55 MISSIONS



2nd LT. HARRY MITCHELL
1 Mission

RAYMOND
J. PALERMO



2nd LT. WILLIAM M. RAMSDELL
Buffalo, N. Y.
3 Missions

2nd LT.
ROBERT
S. ROBINETTE
BUTLER, IND.
18 MISSIONS



2nd LT. JAMES B. SCOFIELD
Susanville, Cal.
12 Missions

1st LT.
CARL L. SIMPSON
LAKEPORT, N. H.
80 MISSIONS



2nd LT. LAWRENCE VARNER
Johnstown, Pa.
64 Missions



2nd LT. FARREL E. YOCUM
Enid, Okla.
42 Missions

## MISSING IN ACTION



CAPT. JOHN R. ANDERSON
Jamestown, N. Y.
55 Missions

2nd LT.
MELVIN K. DAVIS
OSHKOSH, WIS.
15 MISSIONS



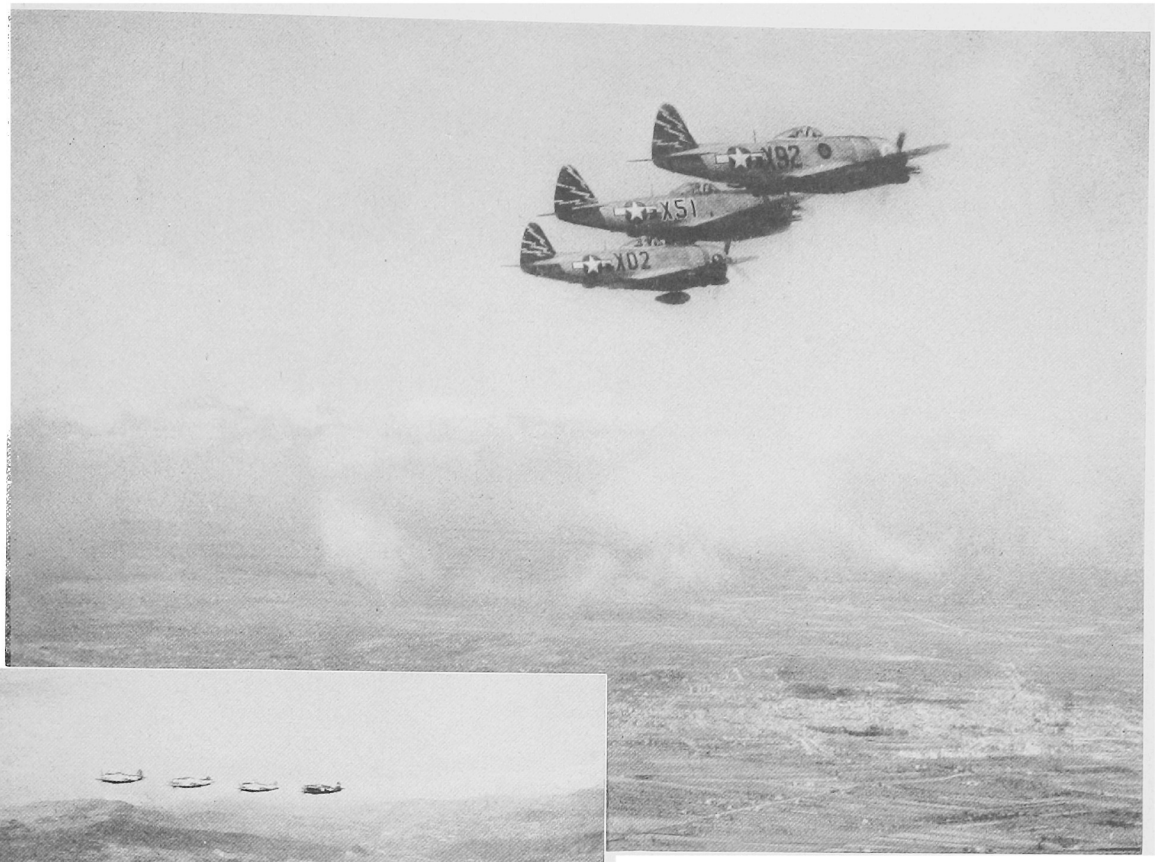
1st LT. CLARENCE E. PAFF
East Lansing, Mich.
55 Missions

1st LT.
RALPH L. LIND
BROOKLYN, N.Y.
18 MISSIONS



1st LT. ROBERT H. WILLIAMS
Olyphant, Pa.
83 Missions

2nd LT.
WARD T. PRINGLE
CHICAGO, ILL.
3 MISSIONS






# Pilots



*Cesenatico, Italy*
*May 1945*



CAPT. WILLIAM G. ABBOTT
Oregon, Ill.
80 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air M. & 6 OLC's; Purple Heart



1st LT. THOMAS S. ANDERSON
Rockford, Ill.
15 Missions—WIA
Air Medal; Purple Heart



1st LT. ROBERT G. APPENZELLER
Portsmouth, Va.
57 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. ELLIOT D.AYER
Hartford, Conn.
96 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's



CAPT. ROBERT S. BARTLETT
Mecklenburg, N. Y.
106 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C. & OLC; Air Medal & OLC's



1st LT. LEONARD BECKERMAN
Chicago, Ill.
83 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 5 OLC's



1st LT. CARLETON J. BEEKS
Monticello, Iowa
89 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's



2nd LT. ROBERT B. BELL
Newburgh, N. Y.
12 Missions—POW.



1st LT. ALBERT K. BENZ
Anderson, Ind.
96 Missions—C.T.C.D.



CAPT. GEORGE O. BLARE
Champaign, Ill.
93 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 5 + OLC's



1st LT. CHARLES K. BOLACK
Worcester, Mass.
74 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 5 + OLC's



1st LT. GEORGE R. BOLTE
Cranford, N. J.
100 Missions—C.T.C.D.

2nd Lt.
LAWRENCE C. BORSHEIM
Minneapolis, Minn.
18 Missions—POW.



F. O. STANLEY J. BRADNER
S. Euclid, Ohio
21 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal



1st LT. MAURICE A. BRASH
Muskegon Hts., Mich.
68 Missions—POW.
Air Medal & OLC's



1st LT. RICHARD J. BUNKER, Jr.
Hudson Falls, N. Y.
70 Missions
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 6 OLC's



1st LT. HAROLD R. BURNS, Jr.
Royal Oak, Mich.
80 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



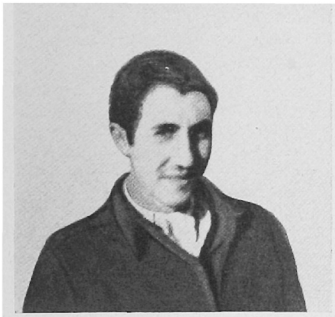
1st LT. CECIL T. BUSH
Dayton, Ohio
84 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's



CAPT. GASTON W. CALLUM
Wilmington, N. C.
108 Missions—C.T.C.D.



F. O. HARRY D. CARLSON, Jr.
Van Nuys, Cal.
26 Missions—C.T.C.D.



CAPT. JOHN O. CIMAGLIA
Newton Centre, Mass.
86 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 6 OLC's



CAPT. MILTON L. CLARK
Mill Village, Pa.
99 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 6 OLC's



MAJ. JOSEPH W. CONNELLY
Hartford, Conn.
75 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 6 OLC's



CAPT. CARL E. CRONK
Pekin, Ill.
100 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



1st LT. THOMAS E. COX
Memphis, Tenn.
80 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 5 OLC's



CAPT. DALE F. DeHAY
Douglas, Arizona
102 Missions—C.T.C.D.



1st LT. JOHN J. DOSWELL
Ft. Wayne, Ind.
47 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal



1st LT. ROBERT J. DUFFIELD
Cleveland Hts. Ohio
97 Missions—C.T.C.D.



1st LT. WILLIAM M. EARNEST
Atlanta, Ga.
80 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & OLC's



1st LT. MALIN S. ELTZROTH
Maple Hts., Ohio
90 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's



CAPT. WILLIAM J. EREK
San Antonio, Tex.
92 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 5 OLC's



1st LT. DELMAR L. ESTES
E. Canadian, Okla.
90 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 5 OLC's



1st LT. EDWARD G. EVANS
Phila, Pa.
93 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC's



1st LT. JACK FAIRES
Ft. Morgan, Colo.
26 Missions—WIA & MIA
Air Medal; Purple Heart



2nd LT. WILLIAM P. FEIMER
Baltimore, Md.
8 Missions—WIA
Purpe Heart



1st LT. ANGELO S. FELLET
Yuma, Arizona
110 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & OLC's



MAJ. ALFRED L. FETTERS
Lancaster, Ohio
100 Missions—TRFD.
Silver Star; D.F.C. & OLC; Air Medal & OLC's



1st LT. LAWRENCE E. FOSGATE
Winter Park, Fla.
23 Missions—WIA
Air Medal; Purple Heart



1st LT. MARTIN J. GRANBERG
West Haven, Conn.
100 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's



CAPT. DONALD J. GRAVENSTINE
Middletown, Ohio
119 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 5 OLC's



CAPT. ROBERT J. GRUVER
Bethlehem, Pa.
106 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



CAPT. CHARLES F. HALE
Springfield, Mass.
80 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 10 OLC's



CAPT. FRANK R. HARLOCKER
Honolulu, T. H.
100 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Soldiers Medal; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



1st LT. MATTHEW F. HASBROUCK, Jr.
Stone Ridge, N. Y.
91 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's



1st LT. HERBERT M. HAZZARD
Lewes, Delaware
51 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC



1st LT. JOHN R. HILDEBRAND
Fowler, Kansas
50 Missions
Air Medal & OLC



1st LT. JOHN G. HOAGLAND
Bloomfield, N. J.
80 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 8 OLC's

2nd LT. WILLIAM E. HODGE

Mineral Springs, Ark.

2 Missions—WIA.

Purple Heart

1st LT.
FRANKLIN T. JOHNSON
L. A., Cal.
P.O.W.
Air Medal



2nd LT. WILLIS R. JOHNSON
Kenosha, Wis.
64 Missions—C.T.C.D.



1st LT. JOHN E. KEENE
Minoan, N. J.
52 Missions—TRFD.
Air Medal & OLC; Purple Heart



CAPT. ROBERT P. KELLEY
W. Roxbury, Mass.
100 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's;
Bronze Star; Purple Heart



CAPT. AUBERT R. KETTENBRINK
St. Louis, Mo.
90 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC's



1st LT. FRANK W. KOHRS
Dallas, Tex.
45 Missions
Air Medal & OLC



1st LT. FRED W. KRETZER
Williamsport, Md.
55 Missions
Air Medal & OLC



1st LT. LEANDER L. LA FLEX
Woodstock, Ill.
98 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's



1st LT. ROBERT F. LAIRD, Jr.
Salem, N. J.
91 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. HAROLD D. LAND
Kokomo, Ind.
96 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC's



CAPT. JOSEPH V. LANSING
Atlanta, Georgia
93 Missions—C.T.C.D.



CAPT. LYLE M. LAPPIN
Wahiawa, Oahu, T. H.
92 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's



1st LT. MARLIN E. KLASSIE
Renwick, Iowa - 60 Missions
Killed in Patrol-Flight Accident,
Salzburg, Austria, 25 Oct. 45
Air Medal & OLC



CAPT. MILO R. KLEAR
Alameda, Cal.
109 Missions—C. T. C. D.
Air Medal & OLC



CAPT. DONALD I. LAWLESS
Wichita, Kan.
100 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



1st LT. ALFRED G. LEA
High Point, N. C.
92 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's



CAPT. RICHARD W. LONG
Lafayette, La.
109 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's



1st LT. HUGH D. LOOKER
Rochester, N. Y.
100 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC's



1st LT. WILLIAM J. McLANE
Miami, Fla.
90 Missions—C.T.C.D.



MAJ. MALCOLM A. McNALL
Medford, Mass.
114 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 5 + OLC's



1st LT. JACK R. MACKECHNIE
Okla. City, Okla.
89 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's

1st LT.
GEORGE C. MANUMAKI
Wauwatosa, Wis.
88 Missions—C.T.C.D.



1 st LT. LESTER F. MARQUART
Newville, Pa.
67 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's



CAPT. WILLIAM MATHESIUS
W. Orange, N. J.
100 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC's



CAPT. HOLLIS B. MERRELL
Baldwin, Wisconsin
75 Missions, TRFD.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's



LT. HARRY MILLER, Jr.
Wabash, Ind.
43 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC



CAPT. PHILIP G. MILLER
Scarsdale N. Y.
93 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & OLC's
Purple Heart



1st LT. JAMES A. MILNER
Terre Haute, Ind.
62 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. B. D. MONTGOMERY, Jr.
San Antonio, Texas
38 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC



1st LT. HOWARD M. MOORE
Highland Park, Mich.
37 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal



1st LT. DEWITT H. MORTON
Wyomissing, Pa.
52 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC



2nd LT. FRED J. MOSCHBERGER
Elizabeth, N. J.
23 Missions—P.O.W.
D.F.C.; Air Medal



2nd LT. CHARLES D. MUNROE
Oswego, N. Y.
35 Missions—TRFD.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



CAPT. GEORGE H. NASHOLD, Jr.
Fredrica, Delaware
107 Missions—C.T.C.D.



1st LT. RALPH A. NICE
Sioux City, Iowa
39 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC



CAPT. RAYMOND E. NYSTROM
Atlantic Highlands, N. J.
100 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



CAPT. CONRAD H. ODLE, Jr.
Layten, Utah
106 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



1st LT. WILLIAM W. OGDEN
Geneva, Pa.
93 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's
Purple Heart

2nd LT. ARTHUR J. PALMER
Long Island City, N. Y.
9 Missions—WIA.
Air Medal; Purple Heart



1st LT. DONALD B. PARRY
Tempe, Arizona
63 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. JAMES PHELAN
Fall River, Mass.
94 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



2nd LT. ROBERT W. PHILLIPS
Fairfield, Iowa
29 Missions—TRFD.
Air Medal



1st LT. EDWIN L. PLANK
Galveston, Ind.
58 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. JOHN E. PLATZ, Jr.
Texarkana, Tex.
90 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's

2nd LT. LLOYD A. POAGUE
Navajo, Calif.
4 Missions—TRFD.



1st LT. HARRY K. POWELL
Akron, Ohio
81 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's



CAPT. ROBERT W. PROCTOR
Hackensack, N.J.
91 Missions—C.T.C.D.



1st LT. MATTHEW F. PURCHLA, Jr.
Chicago, Ill.
51 Missions—WIA.
Air Medal & OLC; Purple Heart



CAPT. JOHN R. RHODES, Jr.
Philadelphia, Pa.
100 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



1st LT. CHARLES W. ROBINSON
New Orleans, La.
70 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's

2nd LT. PAUL M. RUPPERT
FRANKLIN, Ohio
7 Missions—WiA.
Purple Heart



CAPT. WILLIAM L. RYBURN
Erwin, Tenn.
80 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 5 + OLC's



1st LT. RICHARD G. SANDERSON
Trenton, N. J.
92 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's



1st LT. HOWARD A. SMITH
Lawrenceville, Ill.
31 Missions—POW.



2nd LT. STEWART H. SPENCER
San Francisco, Calif.
2 Missions



1st LT. WILLIAM S. STALTER
Peoria, Ill.
96 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's



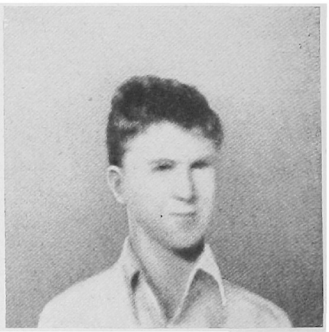
CAPT. WALTER SZEELEY
Hawthorne, N. J.
97 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



CAPT. SAMUEL L. SAY
E. McKeesport, Pa.
80 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 5 + OLC's



CAPT. POWELL A. SCHEUMACK
Victoria, Tex.
113 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Silver Star; D.F.C.;
Air Medal & 2 OLC's; Purple Heart



2nd LT. CHARLES O. SEILER
Topeka, Kan.
2 Missions—TRFD.



F. O. WESLEY A. STAGE
Milwaukee, Wis.
12 Missions—POW.
Air Medal



1st LT. ROBERT M. SWEENEY
Salisbury, Missouri
60 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. JAMES F. SWEETING
Cleveland Heights, Ohio
71 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's



1st LT. HENRY P. SIMMONS
Skaneateles, N. Y.
51 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC



1st LT. MYRON SWINGLE
Brooklyn, N. Y.
46 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC



1st LT. RALPH V. SLATER
Dayton, Ohio
61 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



CAPT. JACK L. SLATTON
Anderson, S. C.
106 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



CAPT. ROBERT N. TAYLOR
New Concord, Ohio
97 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 5 + OLC's



1st LT. GERALD TELDON
Woodmere, L. I., N. Y.
62 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC



1st LT. WILLIAM C. THOMAS, Jr.
Salt Lake City, Utah
90 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. KENNETH A. THOMPSON
Chicago, Ill.
96 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



1st LT. JOHN S. TOBIN
Ft. Collins, Col.
65 Missions
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. RAPHAEL TOURIN
Los Angeles, Cal.
89 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's



1st LT. FRED W. TROXEL
Cerro Gordo, Ill.
57 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



CAPT. MICHAEL A. TUSA
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
100 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's



1st LT. EUGENE T. VAN HOUTEN
Hamlin, N. Y.
29 Missions—POW
D.F.C.; Air Medal



1st LT. RAYMOND F. WAJDA
Chicago, Ill.
111 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & OLC's



1st LT. FRANK J. WARD
Detroit, Mich.
79 Missions
Silver Star; D.F.C.; Air Medal & 2OLC's



1st LT. PHILIP H. WATSON
S. Brooksville, Maine
59 Missions
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. ARTHUR R. WEAND
Lansdale, Pal.
62 Missions
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. FRANCIS M. WILLIAMS
Starke, Fla.
87 Missions—C.T.C.D.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. ERNEST W. WILSON, Jr
Atchison, Kansas
60 Missions
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



CAPT. ROBERT C. WOODBURY
Ft. Worth, Tex.
50 Missions
Air Medal & OLC



CAPT. MAX L. WYSONG
Ypsilanti, Mich.
94 Missions
Air Medal & 4 OLC's

1st LT. WILLIAM N. PACE, Jr.
Guthrie, Ky.
80 Missions—C.T.C.D.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 7 OLC's

2nd LT. DOUGLAS E. FONSTAD
(Transferred)

2nd LT. ERNEST C. TOMPSON
(Transferred)

# Ground Crews

## OFFICERS



1st LT. EDWARD B.BARRETT
Ann Arbor,Mich. - Personal Equip't.



CAPT. AARON S. BELL
Dorchester, Mass. - Adjutant



1st LT. HOWARD L. BUCHANON
Birmingham, Ala. - Ass't Operations



CAPT. CHESTER CAMPBELL
Chicago, Ill. - Intelligence
Bronze Star



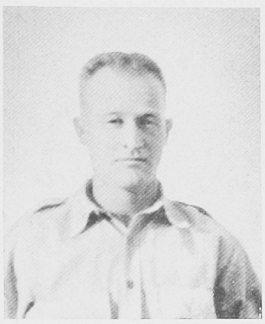
1st LT. WALTER I. CHMIELEWSKI
Detroit, Mich. - Armament



2nd LT. WILLIAM CLANCEY
Armament



CAPT. LOYCE H. ELLIOTT
Saltillo, Miss. - Adjutant



CAPT. GUY C. HOWARD
Poxton, Ill - Engineering



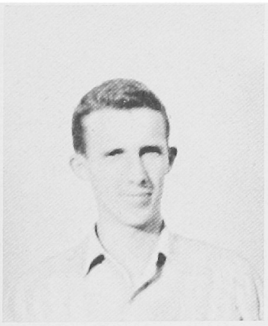
1st LT. WILL. L. HUDDLESTON
San Antonio,Tex. - Communications



MAJ. ELMER W. JOHNSON
East Orange, N.J. - Adjutant



1st LT. JOSEPH R. KAGY
Shelbyville, Ill. - Supply & Transp.



1st LT. KENNETH J. KNABB
Alhambra, Cal. - Communications



1st LT. THOMAS H. MORAN
Engineering



MAJ. BERNARD C. MULLIN, Jr.
Providence, R. I. - Executive
Bronze Star



CAPT. HENRY J. WINSAUER
Kohler, Wis. - Flight Surgeon
Bronze Star

1st LT. HERBERT PARMET
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Communications



CAPT. JOSEPH A. ROBINSON
Susquehanna, Pa. - Ordinance



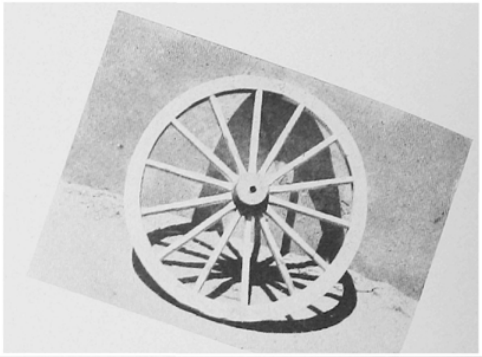
CAPT. SAMUEL O. RUFF
Cleveland, N. C. - Special Service



CAPT. WALTER J. SEIDEL
Flint, Mich. - Intelligence

1st LT. JOHN H. WILSON
Augusta, Kansas
Armament

# Orderly Room





*Cesenatico, Italy, June 1944*



T/SGT.
ROBERT DRUM
Rockville Center, L. I., N. Y.

1st/SGT.
HOWARD ROSENBERG
Bronx, N. Y.

F/SGT.
HUGH J. BOYLE, Jr.
Fort Worth, Tex.

CPL.
NATHAN GOLDMAN
Woonsocket, R. I.

SGT.
GEORGE W. GUTHMAN
Cleveland Hgts., Ohio

SGT.
MILO E. FOREMAN
Seminole, Okla.



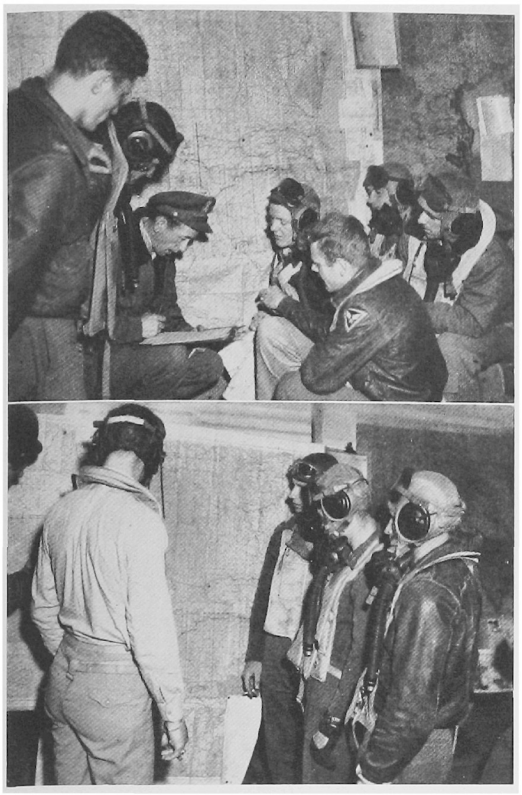
S/SGT.
GENE L. HOUSTON
Van Buren, Missouri

S/SGT.
JAMES J. MAYR, Jr.
Phila, Pa.

CPL.
GEORGE W. PITULA
New York, N. Y.

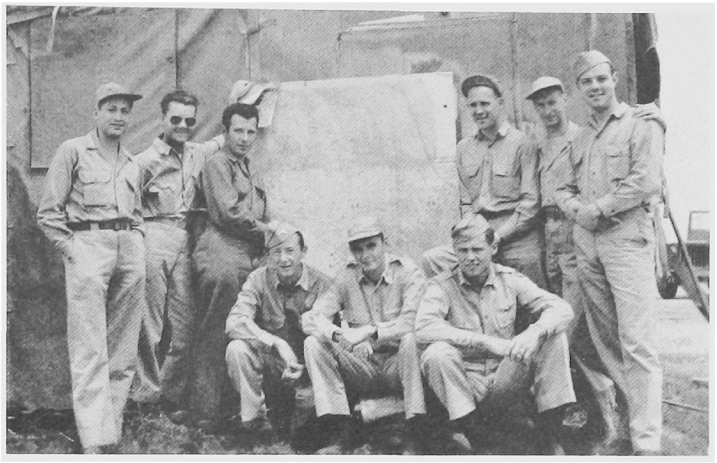
CPL.
CLARENCE M. SHAY, Jr.
Fairfield, Conn.

S/SGT.
WALTER T. SMITH
Laurel, Del.

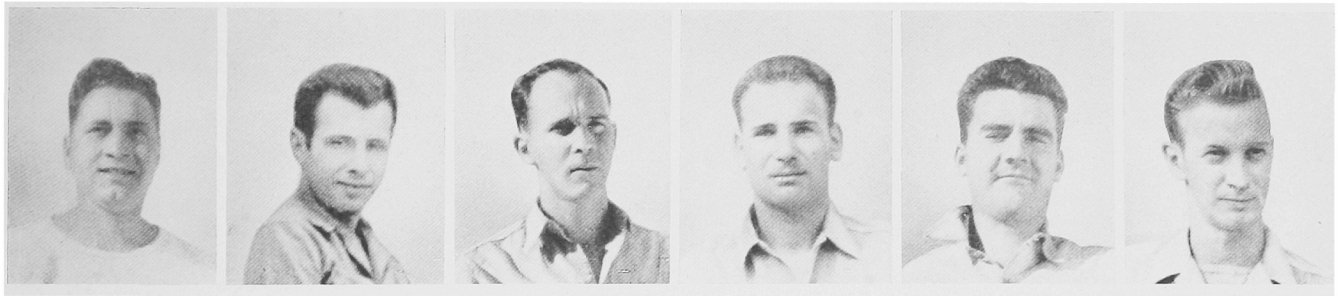


Interrogating . . . and Briefing

# Operations



Pomigliano, Italy
June 1944



S/SGT. LEON A. MANNE
Kansas City, Mo.
OPS

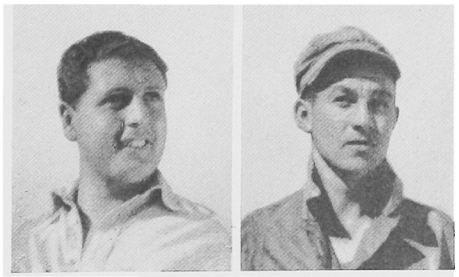
S/SGT. Rudolph G. HOGAJ
Mason, Wisconsin
S-2

SGT. DONALD M. PRICE
Westlake, Ohio

CPL. HERMAN FINKELSTEIN
Brooklyn, N. Y.

CPL. CHAS. A. FARQUHAR, Jr.
Merchantville, N. J.

SGT. ALLEN ERICK
Dunkirk, N. Y.



SGT. FRED J. LUCENTE
Hibbing, Minn.

PFC. HAROLD E. McCONNELL
Greenville, S. C.

S/SGT.
RUSSELL A. KOCH, Jr.
Klare, Mich.

# *Line*



*Corsica*
*July 1942*

## LINE CHIEFS



M/SGT. GILBERT S. HUMBLE
Wilder, Idaho

M/SGT. ALBERT R. JONES



*Pomigliano, Italy, June 1944*

## A FLIGHT

## FLIGHT CHIEFS



T/Sgt.
Joe YEARGIN
Dyersburg, Tenn.

T/Sgt.
Ralph D. WELLS
Morrowville, Kan.
Bronze Star

S/Sgt.
Clarence A. BARNES, Jr.
Greenburg, Kansas

S/Sgt.
Leonard E. BEAUVAIS
Greenfield, Mass.

Sgt.
Leroy R. CONRAD
Chicago, Ill.

S/Sgt.
Harry C. FLESCHIG, Jr.
Winthrop, Mass.



S/Sgt.
Daniel D. FIELDER, Jr.
Belzoni, Miss.

S/Sgt.
Edwin E. HOCH
Donsfife, Pa.

CPL.
Roscoe B. JACKSON
Candler, N. C.

S/Sgt.
Charles E. LEAHY
Allentown, Pa.

S/Sgt.
Joseph P. MONACO
Cecil, Pa.

S/Sgt.
Edwin P. NEWBAULD
Chicago, Ill.



S/Sgt.
Marvin V. PEACH
Walnut, Ill.

S/Sgt.
Richard J. REILLY
Chandler, Ariz.

S/Sgt.
Henry E. THEDFORD
Wesson, Miss.

S/Sgt.
Lon G. WHITE
Statesville, N. C.

Cp.
James E. FLAHERTY
New York City, N. Y.



*Pomigliano, Italy, June 1944*

## B FLIGHT

FLIGHT CHIEF



T/Sgt.
Lyle E. MASON
Armington, Ill.
Bronze Star

S/Sgt.
Harell J. BRANDON
Borger, Tex.

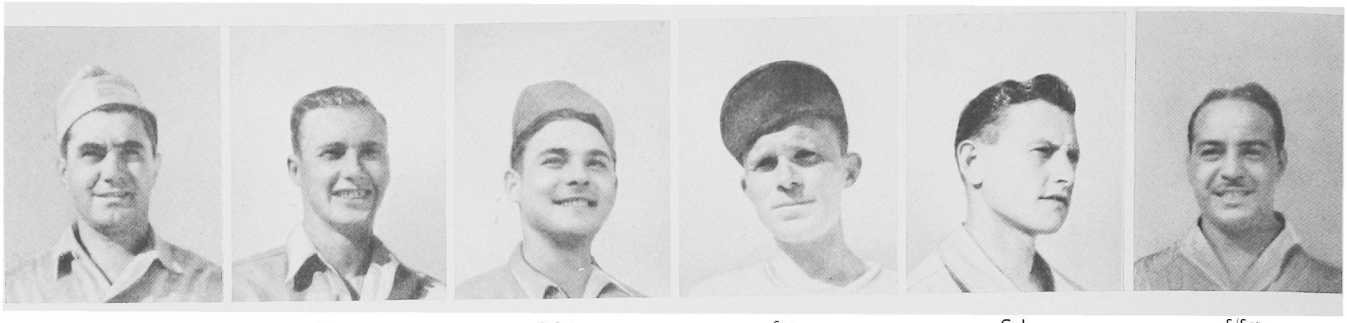
S/Sgt.
Kenneth C. COMEAUX
Plaquemine, La.

S/Sgt.
Peter N. ANGEL
Berlin, N. J.

S/Sgt.
Herman F. CRAFT
Fort Worth, Tex.

Sgt.
Merle F. BAKER

Choctaw,
Okla.



Cpl.
Paul P. BOYAJIAN
Haverhill, Mass.

S/Sgt.
Edward H. CAMPBELL, Jr.
Columbus, Ohio

S/Sgt.
Eugene A. CIESLINSKI
Buffalo, N. Y.

Sgt.
David T. CRAWLEY
Knoxville, Tenn.

Cpl.
John T. GREENSLATE
Peoria, Ill.

S/Sgt
Julius LOCKMAN
Indianapolis, Ind.



## C FLIGHT

### FLIGHT CHIEFS



T/Sgt.
Leonard J. BACHETTE
Newell, Pa.
Soldiers Medal

S/Sgt.
Phillip J. ROMPREY
Center Harbor, N. H.
Bronze Star

S/Sgt.
Ralph C. COX
New Orleans, La.

Sgt.
Thurman E. CURTIS
McEwen, Tenn.

S/Sgt.
Walter E.
DE CHENE
Chicago
Ill.

S/Sgt.
James DENNIS
Red Oak, Okla.



S/Sgt.
Arthur H. GUENTHER
Crofton, Neb.

S/Sgt.
George L. McCOMMACK
Marmet Kanawha, W.Va.

S/Sgt.
Chester P. OLENGINSKI
Glen Lyon, Pa.

S/Sgt.
Harold E. STEVENS
Waterloo, Iowa

S/Sgt.
Clifford WESTFALL
Ivanhoe, W. Va.

S/Sgt.
Montie L. WHITTENBURG
Foss, Okla.

# D FLIGHT



Pomigliano, Italy, June 1944

## FLIGHT CHIEFS



S/Sgt.
Hohannes G. VAN HILLO
Fitchburg, Mass.

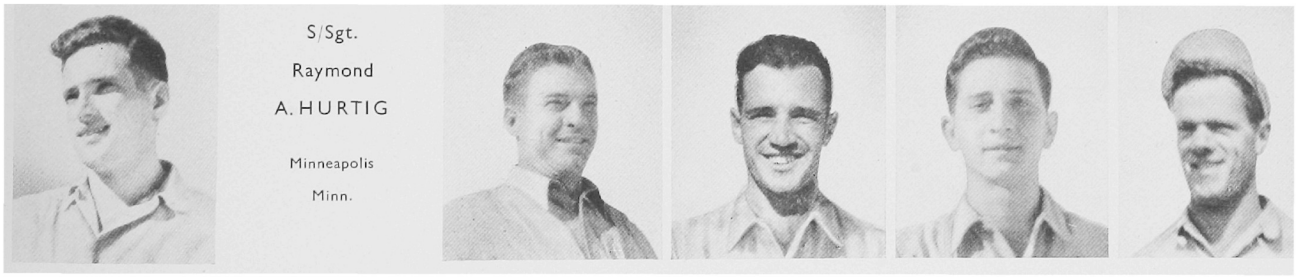
T/Sgt.
George H. LUTZ
Marshfield, Wis.

S/Sgt.
Bill BAILEY
Oklahoma City, Okla

S/Sgt.
Paul E. BLAKE
Allston, Mass.

S/Sgt.
Clarence A. BLICKENSTAFF
Jamesville, Cal.

S/Sgt.
Mac R. GUTHRIE
Maud, W. Va.



Sgt.
Edward J. HOLLYWOOD
Brooklyn, N. Y.

S/Sgt.
Raymond
A. HURTIG
Minneapolis
Minn.

S/Sgt.
Kay C. JAMES
Hineston, La.

Cpl.
Earnest KERTH
River Grove, Ill.

Sgt.
Patrik A. PETERS
Hollidays Cove, W. Va.

S/Sgt.
George RIVERT
Thorndike, Mass.



Pfc.
Walter RUBLOWSKY
Scranton, Pa.

Cpl.
Richard A. SCHUTTS
Blasdell, N. Y.

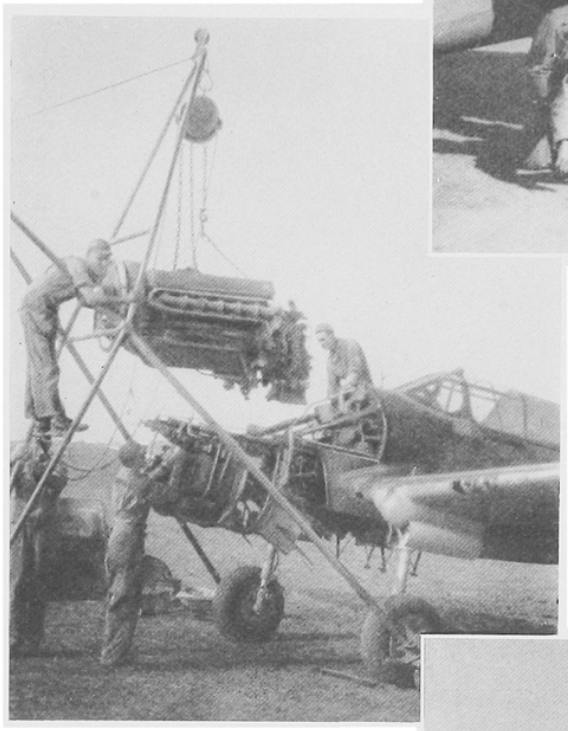
S/Sgt.
Paul E. UTLEY
Mt. Vernon, Ind.

S/Sgt.
Truman O. WALLACE
Tulsa, Okla.

S/Sgt.
William O. WOOTEN
Dallas, Tex.

L.G. 174 Egypt, Africa, Dec. 1942





P-40 Engine Change

# Engineering



Cesenatico, Italy, June 1945

Charles C. BAIRD
Hampton, Va.



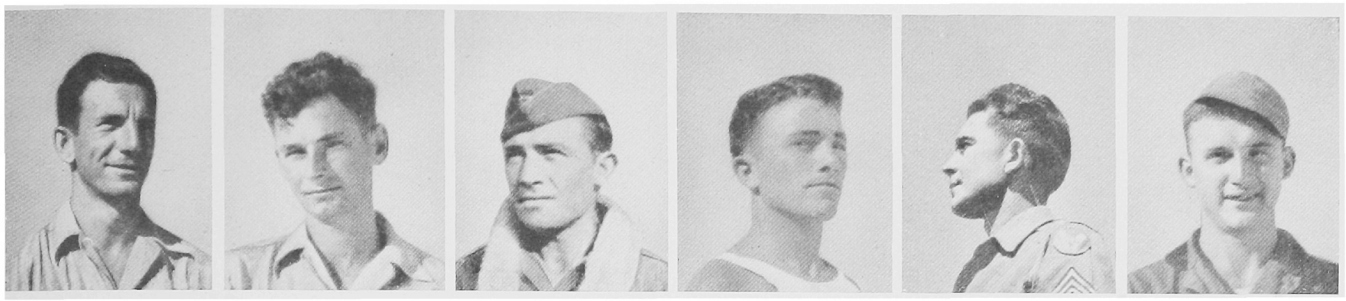
M/Sgt.
Walter L. FERRY
Union, N. Y.
Bronze Star

M/Sgt.
Donald C. WARING
Delhi, N. Y.
Engineering Section
Bronze Star

T/Sgt.
Anthony J. GAGLIARDO
Hannibal, N. Y.
Electrician

S/Sgt.
George A. LUX
New Brunswick, N. J.
Electrician

T/Sgt.
Max R. THIEME
Bronx, N. Y.
Electrician



S/Sgt.
Randolph C. MITCHELL
Winnsboro, Tex.
Electrician

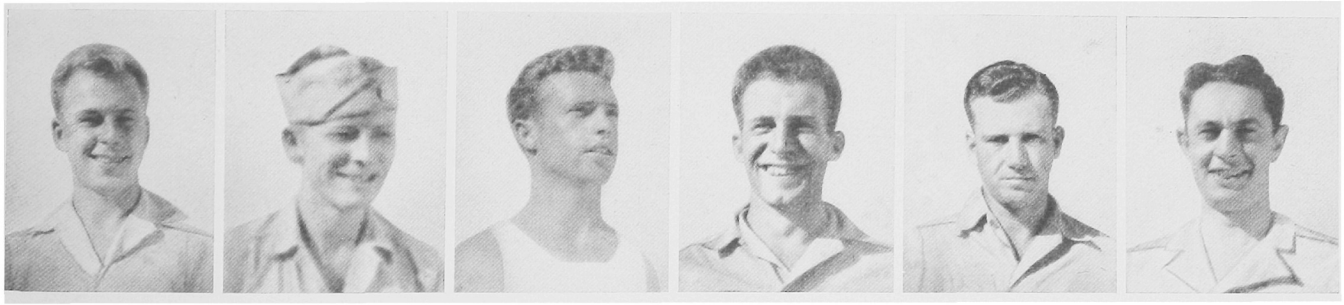
S/Sgt.
Telford H. WEAVER
Navasota, Tex.
Sheet metal

S/Sgt.
Henry C. CRAIG
Raleigh N. C.
Sheet metal

Sgt.
James BEVILACQUA
Roslindale, Mass.
Sheet metal

S/Sgt.
Roy J. HOGUE
New Brighton, Pa.
Painter

T/Sgt.
David H. SCHUTH
Rochester, N. Y.



S/Sgt.
Stanley R. SCHUTTE
Rochester, N. Y.

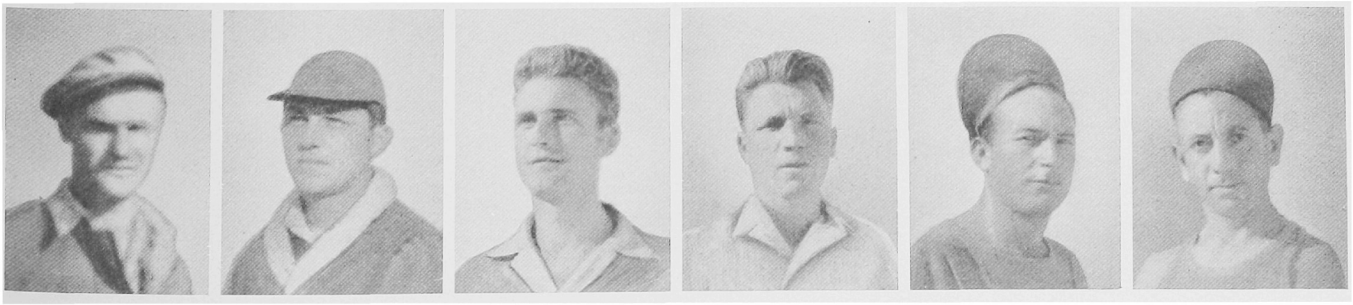
Sgt.
Ewing L. RICHARDSON
Seattle, Wash.

T/Sgt.
Fredrick R. BOEHMER
Yorktown Heights, N. Y.
Mechanic

S/Sgt.
William A. DAVIS
Bartlesville, Okla.
Mechanic

S/Sgt.
Omer L. SHAW
Abingdon, Ill.
Mechanic

Sgt.
Thomas GEORGE
New Castle, Pa.
Mechanic



S/Sgt.
Gus SKROBARCZYK
Stockdale, Tex.
Mechanic

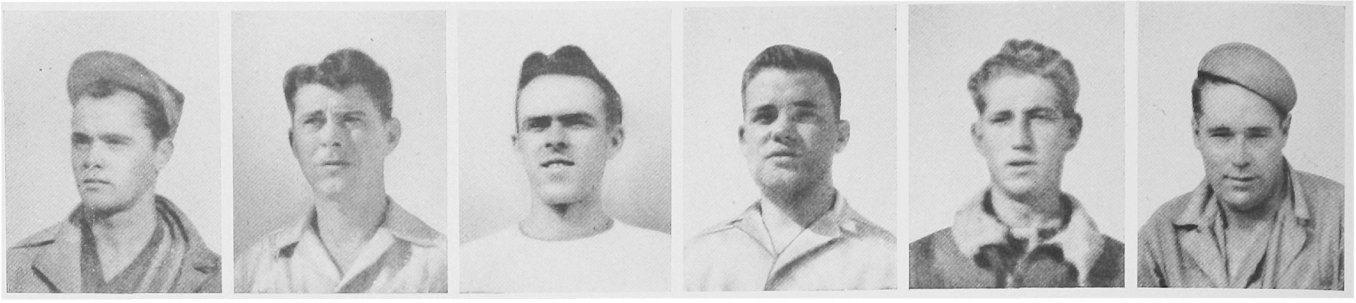
Sgt.
Aaron H. KRAMSKY
La Cresenta, Cal.
Mechanic

Sgt.
Richard D. BABCOCK
East Greenwich, R.I.
Mechanic

S/Sgt.
Leslie J. ROGERS
San Bernardino, Cal.
Mechanic
Soldiers Medal

T/Sgt.
Ludy C. HARRISON, Jr.
Hazel, Okla.
Mechanic

CPL.
Andrew IACOVINO
Waterbury, Conn.
Mechanic



S/Sgt.
PAWLY
Mechanic

CPL.
Edwin MARTIN
El Paso, Tex.
Mechanic

Cpl.
John K. JOHNSTON
Portland, Ore
Gas Truck

Pfc.
Harvey J. CRAIG
Detroit, Mich.
Gas Truck

Sgt.
Paul D. RICE
Savannah, Tenn.
Gas Truck

Sgt.
Wilford J. WEBER
North Collins, N. Y.
Gas Truck



S/Sgt.
Samuel T. COOPER
Dallas, Tex.
Clerk

S/Sgt.
Stanley SUM
Amsterdam, N. Y.
Clerk

Cpl.
Michael J. COLLETTI
Parkchester Bronx, N.Y.
Clerk

Cpl.
William J. O'BUCK
Perth Amboy, N. J.
Clerk

Pfc.
William H. COPELAND, Jr.
Warwick, Mass.
Gas Truck

Sgt.
Frank S. SIMKUS
Cleveland, Ohio
Parachute



Cpl.
Edward MANCINI
Elmont, L. I., N. Y.
Parachute

Pfc.
Stewart E. GILMORE
Marion, Ohio
Parachute

S/Sgt.
Ralph B. COOLEY
Spokane, Wash.
Instruments

Sgt.
Chester J. BOGDAN
Secaucus, N. J.
Welder

Sgt.
Herman WATERMAN
New York, N. Y.
Tower

S/Sgt.
Frank E. SANDERS
Tulsa, Okla.
Carpenter

S/Sgt.
Robert N. MARTIN
Wichita, Kansas
Cletrac

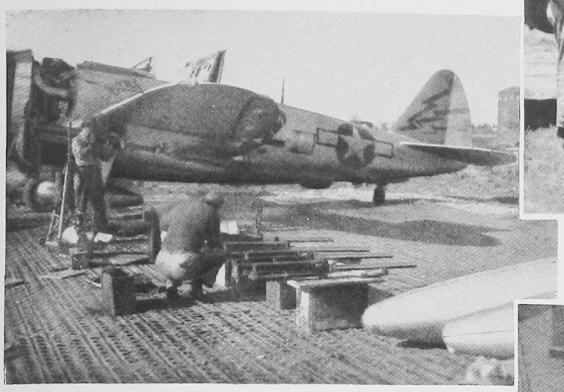


Cpl.
Aaron H. WISE
Tulsa, Okla.

Cpl.
Frank PYZESKI
Natrowa, Pa.



Pomigliano, Italy, June 1944



Fano, Italy, Feb. 1945



Cesenatico, Italy, June 1945

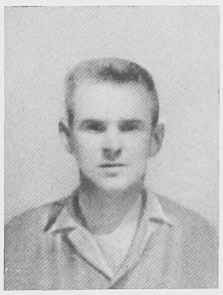
# Armament



M/Sgt.
George I. NADVORNIK
Salem, Ore.
Bronze Star



M/Sgt.
Michael A. CALOMINO
Dumore, Pa.



T/Sgt.
John SABESTINAS
Staten Island, N. Y.



T/Sgt.
Chas. W. SINCLAIR
Red Lion, Pa.



CPL.
Angelo R. ALBANO
Pitsfield, Mass.



Sgt.
Fred R. ANTONUCCI
Braintree, Mass.



Cpl.
William A. AYLER, Jr.
Kenmore, N. Y.

Sgt.
Chas. M. BENEDICT
Dallas, Tex.

Cpl.
Harold A. BRIGHAM
Athens, Pa.

Cpl.
M. B. BUNCH
Celina, Tex.

Cpl.
Ernest C. CACILHAS
So. Dartmouth, Mass.

Pfc.
Virgil CARDENAS
Erie, Col.



Cpl.
Oliver M. CLARK
Villa Grove, Ill.

S/Sgt.
James W. CONNORS
Marlborough, Mass.

Pfc.
Marvin D. COOK
Anaheim, Cal.

Cpl.
Jack D. COX
Jeannette, Pa.

Sgt.
Bartholomew F. DONAHUE
Pittsfield, Mass.

Cpl.
Fred H. EDLER, Jr.
Tipton, Iowa



Sgt.
Francis T. FLANIGAN
Rochester, N. Y.

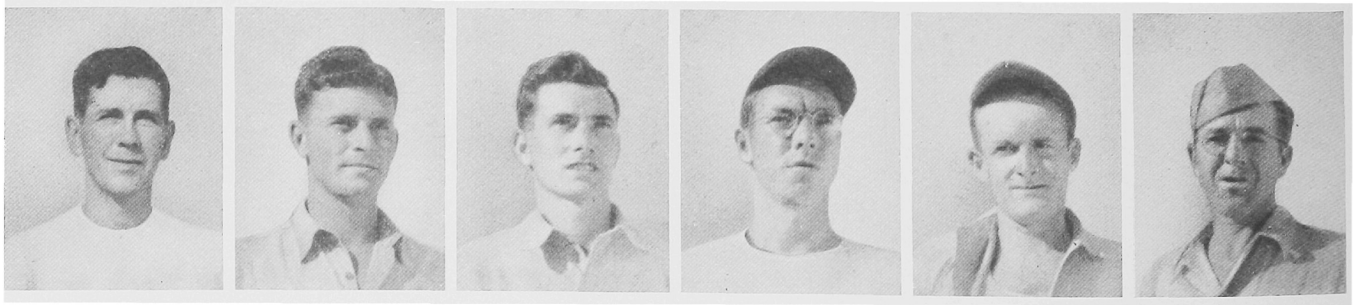
Sgt.
Harold F. FOGG
Glenside, Pa.

Cpl.
James B. FURNISS
New Philadelphia Ohio

Sgt.
Galdino R. GARCIA
Lindsay, Cal.

Sgt.
Richard L. GORLEY
Yampa, Idaho

S/Sgt.
Wesley GOTSHALL
Youngstown, Ohio



Sgt.
Paul N. GUNDERSON
Columbus, N. Dak.

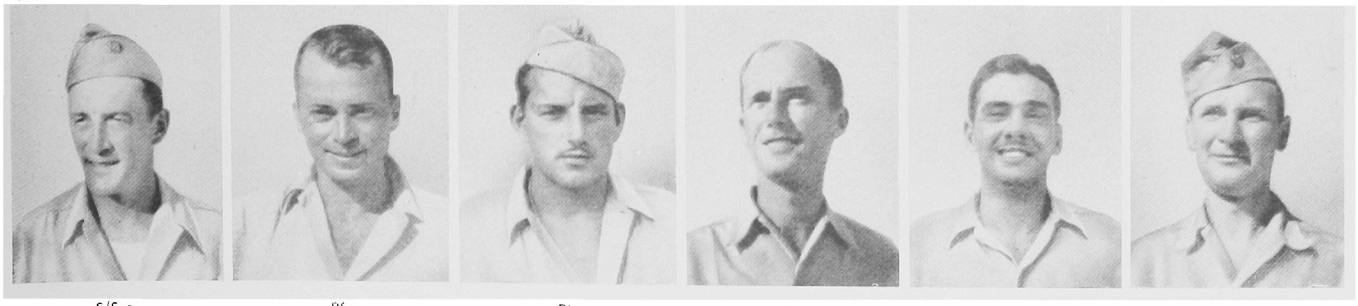
Cpl.
Neal HENDREX
Omak, Washington

S/Sgt.
Earl W. HOFE
Great Cacepon, W. VA.

Sgt.
Richard L. HOLLAND
Chicago, Ill.

Sgt.
Robert S. HOOD
Rochester, N.Y.

Sgt.
Harry F. HORNBAKE
California, Pa.



S/Sgt.
Elvin G. HUBBARD
Twin Rock, Oregon

Pfc.
Felix A. HUNZIKER
La Vergne, Tenn.

Plc.
Peter A. JASAITIS
Chicago, Ill.

Sgt.
Orion A. JONES, Jr.
Louisville, Ky.

Cpl.
William J. KATTAWAR
Beaumont, Tex.

Sgt.
Marian L. KINKEL
Brooklyn, N. Y.



Pfc.
Thomas F. KLEIN, Jr.
Buffalo, N. Y.

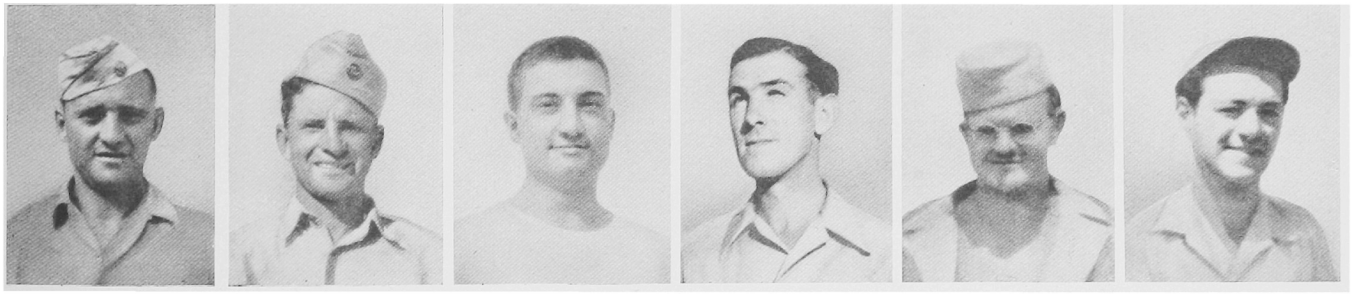
S.Sgt.
Victor E. KOLAR
Cleveland, Ohio

S Sgt.
Robert T. LEHMAN
Burlington, N. J.

Sgt.
George A. McCARTY
Columbus, Ohio

Cpl.
Lee J. MEI
Shaw, Miss.

Cpl.
Stephen MENDEL
Miami Beach, Fla.



Cpl.
Harry L. MICHAEL
Truro, Iowa

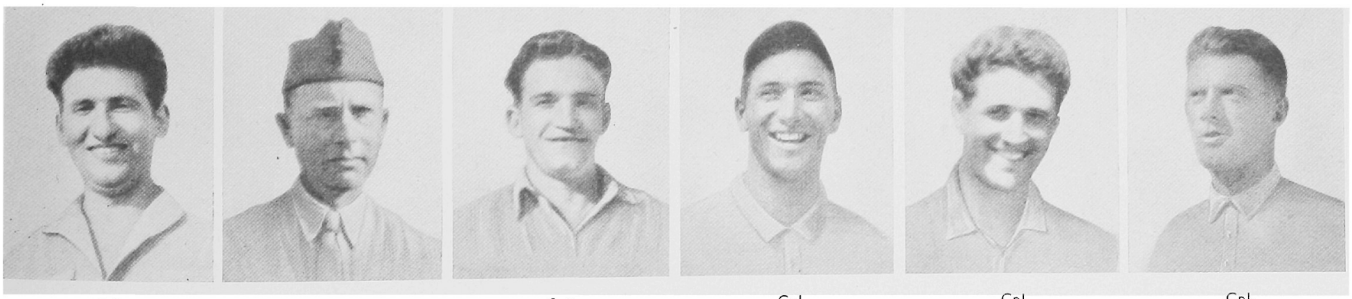
Cpl.
Martin L. PARKER, Jr.
Sondheimer, La.

Sgt.
Albert J. PERRETTI
Wilsonville, Ill.

Stephen POMAKIS
Salem, Mass.

Cpl.
Joseph E. PUMPHREY
Copperton, Utah

Sgt.
William W. RODNEY
Brooklyn, N. Y.



Cpl.
Philip H. SCHNEIDER
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Sgt.
George V. SCHRODER
Houston, Tex.

Sgt.
James C. SORENSON
Phillipsburg, Mont.

Cpl.
Fred A. SPANHUT
Burlington, Iowa

Cpl.
Joseph M. SPEAR
Laurelton, L. I., N. Y.

Cpl.
Harold E. STAHL
Valley View, Pa.



Sgt.
George STATUE
Pottsville, Pa.

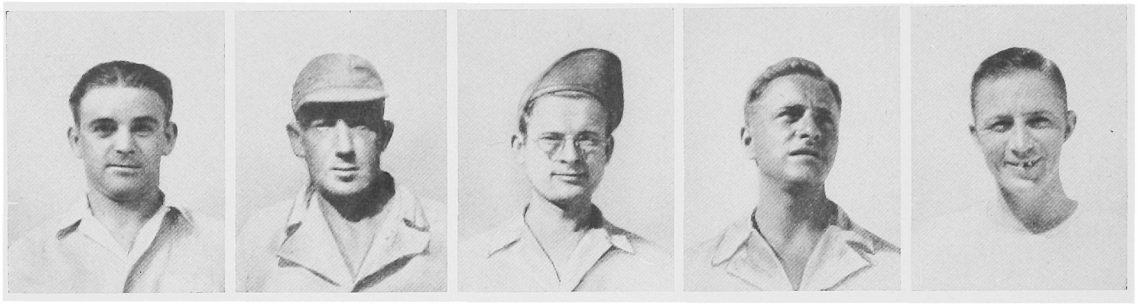
Sgt.
Joseph J. PELERIN
Hague, N. Y.

Cpl.
Morris TABACHNICK
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Cpl.
Samuel THUNDERCHIEF
Holmen, Wis.

S/Sgt.
Henry O. TOMLIN
Nashville, Mich.

Cpl.
Joe TURKALY
Triadelphia, W.Va.



Cpl.
Frank URMANSKI
Weyerhauser, Wis.

Sgt.
Tom WALPOLE
Las Vegas, Nev.

Cpl.
Victor A. WEISENMILLER
Lincoln, Neb.

Sgt.
John G. WNENTA
Brookhaven, N. Y.

Sgt.
Charley L. WILLIAMS
Pelly, Tex.

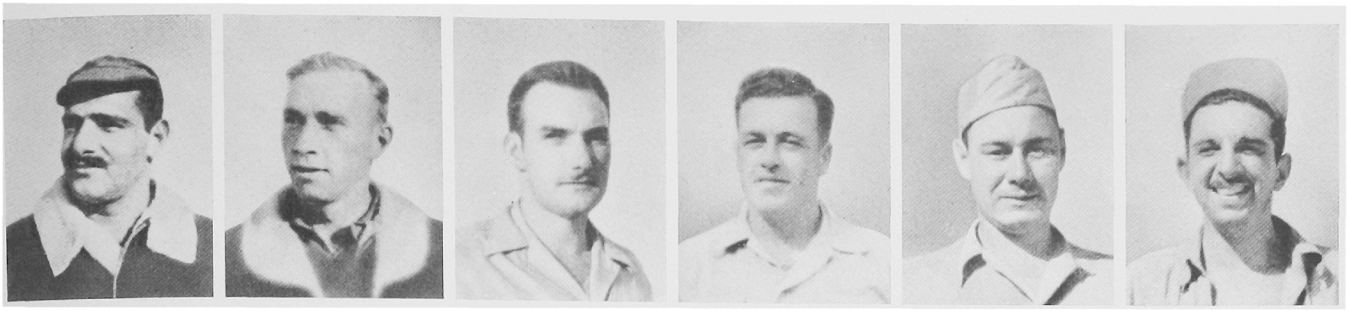


*Pomigliano, Italy, June 1944*

## *Ordnance*



*Cesenatico, Italy, June 1945*



S/Sgt.
Frederick T. BROX
Methuen, Mass.

T/Sgt.
George MURTO
Detroit, Mich.

T/Sgt.
Christopher J. BRADY, Jr.
Roxbury, Mass.

Sgt.
Louis R. BOULIER
Fort Fairfield, Maine

Cpl.
Leon BABULSKY
New London, Conn.

Pfc.
Seymour BLOCK
New York City, N. Y.



Sgt.
Carl S. BROWN
Westboro, Mass.

Sgt.
Clarence C. COSLUSKIE
Shenandoah, Pa.

Sgt.
Ervin E. FITZIMMONS
Limestone, Maine

Cpl.
Joseph S. GRANATO
Hartford, Conn.

Cpl.
Anthony GRANDE
Johnston, R. I.

Pfc.
Joseph A. GUDELAUSKAS
Chicago, Ill.



Cpl.
Albert L. HAGER
Griswoldville, Mass.

Cpl.
James R. HULL
Woodstock, Conn.

Pfc.
Robert T. MANSFIELD
Hannibal, N. Y.

Pfc.
Leonard C. MARKS
White Plains, N. Y.

Pfc.
Albert W. MORRISON
Hammond, Ind.

Cpl.
Edward PIETRAS
Chicopee Falls, Mass.



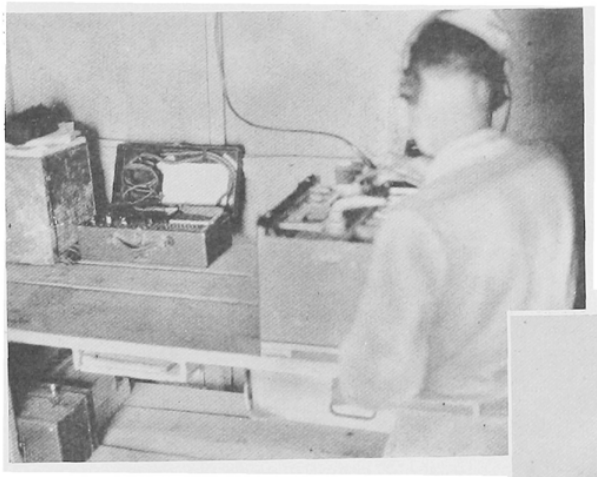
Cpl.
Ralph SWARTZ
Frackville, Pa.

Sgt.
Clifford H. WALLACE
New Haven, Conn.



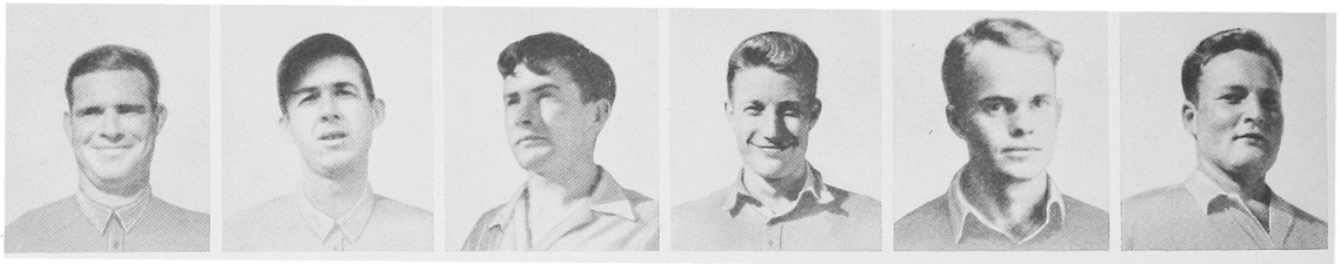
*Fano, Italy*
*Feb. 1945*

# Communications





*Pomigliano, Italy, June 1944*



M/Sgt.
Robert L. STRICKLAND, Jr.
Selma, Ala.

T/Sgt.
Coy WILSON
Marletta, Georgia

T/Sgt.
Arthur H. STATON
Zirconia, N. C.

S/Sgt.
Harold R. ALEXANDER
Redfield, S. Dak.
Bronze Star

S/Sgt.
Richard B. HARRIS
Woodlawn, Pa.

S/Sgt.
Chas. E. MORIARITY
Missouri Valley, Iowa



S/Sgt.
Jackson M. GILMORE
Phila. Pa.

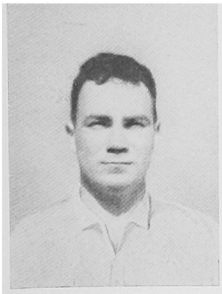
Sgt.
Leroy WELLER
Dayton, O.

Harry W. AUSTIN
Wilkinsburg, Pa.

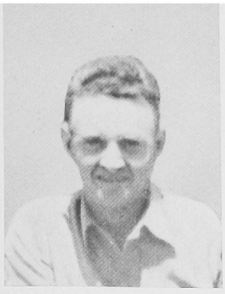
Pfc.
Garland L. BRIGGS
Harbor City, Cal.

Cpl.
Michael N. CICATELLO
Amsterdam, N. Y.

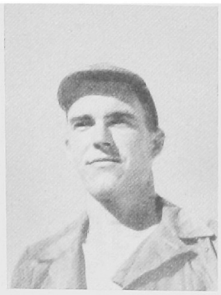
Pfc.
Chas. R. COFFEY, Jr.
Lego, W. Va.



Cpl.
Wilmer R. DOAK
Phila, Pa.



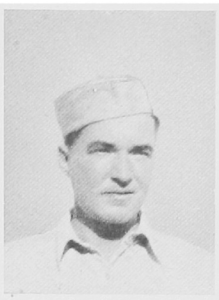
Sgt.
Benton Q. FOY
Dothan, Ala.



S/Sgt.
Billy K. GALBREATH
Thorndale, Tex.



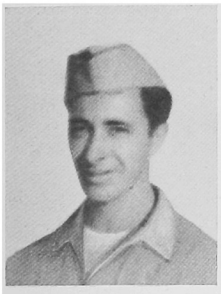
Sgt.
Robert H. GINGHER
Ft. Wayne, Ind.



Sgt.
Edward T. HIGGINS
Chicago, Ill.



S/Sgt.
Stanley F. JEZIAK
Detroit, Mich.



Cpl.
Albert G. KEMP
Long Island City, N. Y.



Sgt.
Donald L. KINGSLEY
Webster City, Iowa



Cpl.
Thadeus M. LISIECKI
California, Pa.



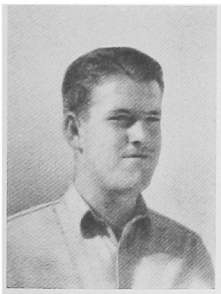
S/Sgt.
Arthur H. MARTIN
Bertha, Minn.



Sgt.
Victor METJE
Mt. Vernon, Ill.



Jack O'BRIEN
Omaha, Neb.



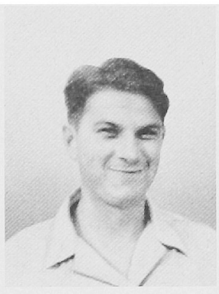
Pfc.
Newton L. OSBORN
Forsythe, Ga.



Cpl.
Pasquale J. PARVANA
Troy, N. Y.



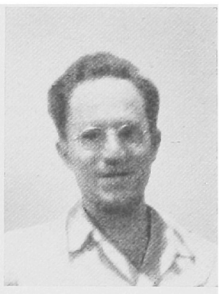
Cpl.
Robert T. PRATT
McKenzie, Tenn.



Cpl.
Donald I. PICKRELL
Springfield, Mass.



Sgt.
Martin KALES
Newark, N. J.



Sgt.
Myer RUDNICK
Hartford, Conn.



Pfc.
Matthias TANSEY, Jr.
New Orleans, La.



Sgt.
Henry L. WELCH, Jr.
Westbrook, Maine

## Tech. Supply



Pomigliano, Italy
June 1944



S/Sgt.
Richard W. BAILEY
Franklin, N. H.
Bronze Star

Cpl.
Joseph J. CLORAN
Dorchester, Mass.

S/Sgt.
Chas. D. DAYBERRY
Casar, N. C.

Sgt.
John C. FORAUER
New Britain, Conn.



Sgt.
Howard W. LONG
Providence, R. I.

T/Sgt.
Jerome P. SALOMON
Brookline, Mass.

Sgt. Eric SAX
Framingham, Mass.
Killed in Tunis

T/Sgt.
Metro SEDEDITCH
Olyphant Pa.

## Q. M. Supply

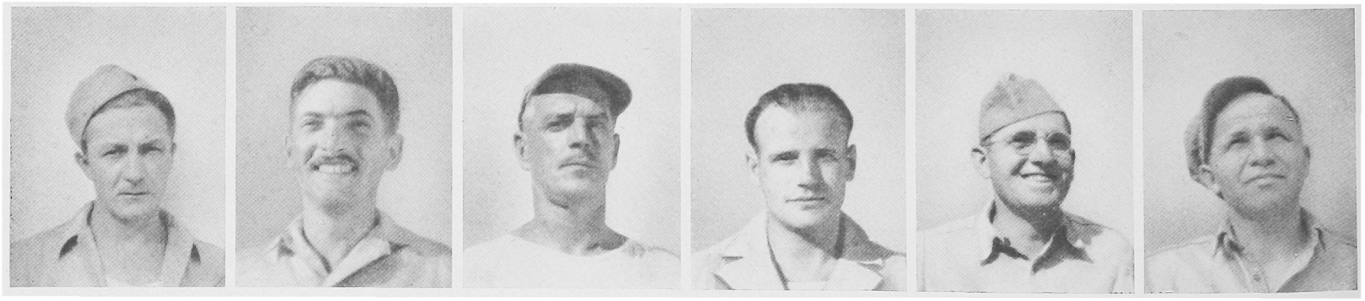




Allan L. BEARDSLEE

Wichita, Kan.

Cesenatico, Italy June 1945



Sgt.
Robert W. DECKER
Phila, Pa.

T/Sgt.
Bernard M. GLASSMAN
Forrest Hills, N. Y.

Sgt.
Francis T. HAYES
Winthrop, Mass.

Pfc.
Otho A. KINDER
Oakland, Cal.

Sgt.
Lawrence M. REED
Sand Springs, Okla.

Cpl.
William F. WOLSKE
Eagle, Wis.

## GUN CAMERA SECTION



Cpl.
Louis DIMAS
Jamestown, N. Y.

S/Sgt.
Harry K. EBBENSEN
White Plains, N. Y.

Cpl.
Clarence W. MEAD
Lakewood, O.

Sgt.
Kenneth McELHANY
Corona, Cal.



Cesenatico, Italy
June 1945

## *Kitchen*



T/Sgt.
Herbert H. BREAZEALE
Eastpoint, Ga.

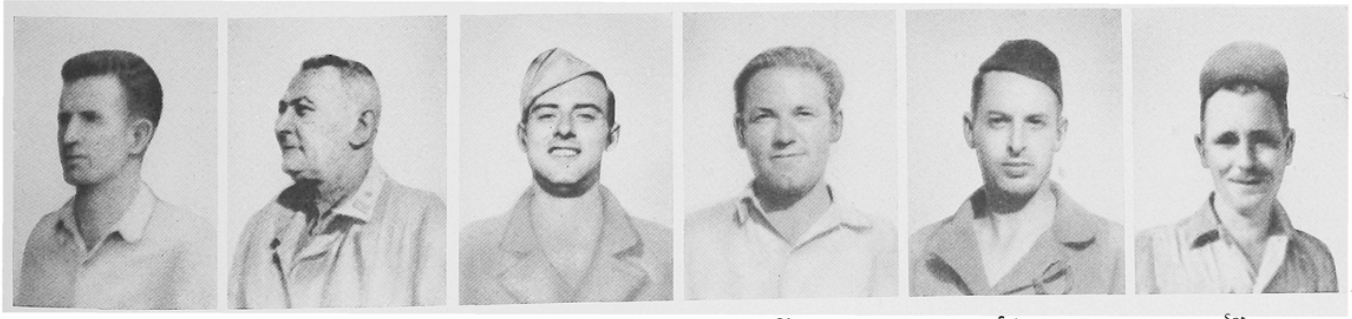
Sgt.
Glen BRONSON
Grand Haven, Mich.

Sgt.
Robert M. CASH
Wixon, Mich.

Cpl.
William H. CLAYCOMB
Blairsville, Pa.

Pfc.
William J. COPE
Lynn, Mass.

Pfc.
John S. CRANEY
Philadelphia, Pa.



Sgt.
James B. CUMMINGS, Jr.
Jersey City, N. J.

T/Sgt.
Roy (Pop) DAVIS
Medford, Okla.

Glenn L. EME, Jr.
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Pfc.
Lester R. DUMMER
Iron Ridge, Wis.

Sgt.
Herbert L. FORSYTHE
Central City, Ky.

Sgt.
Harry L. HODGSON
Great Fall, Mont.



Pfc.
Arthur H. KUNISH
Bay City, Mich.

Cpl.
Edward F. LUKAS
Calumet City, Ill.

Cpl.
Louis G. Le POUTTRE
Bay City, Mich.

Sgt.
Robert W. SMITH
Mifflinburg, Pa.

S.Sgt.
Richard W. WINDSPERGER
Minneapolis, Minn.

## *Transportation*

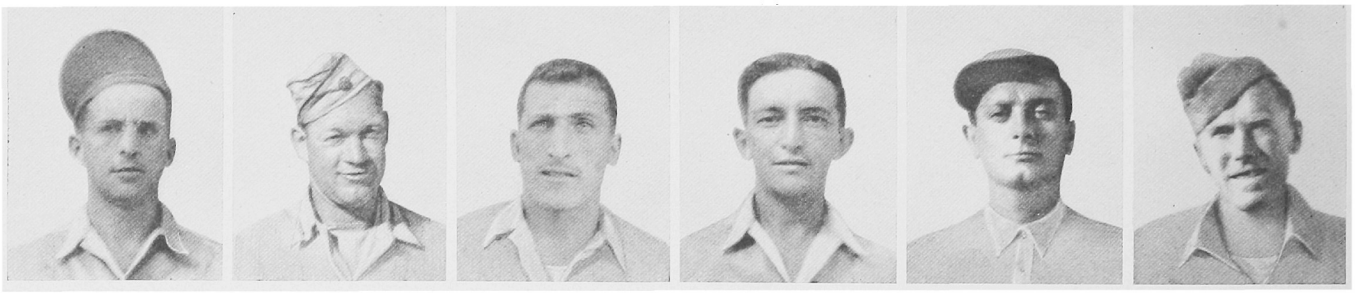


Cpl.
Wilbur G. DeVRIES
Washington, N. J.

Sgt.
Jack TIPPETS
Clifton, Ariz.

S/Sgt.
George J. VOGT, Jr.
Astoria, L. I., N. Y.

S/Sgt.
John A. ZALESKI
New Britain, Conn.



Sgt.
Edgar G. BABINEAU
Westbrook, Maine

Cpl.
Forrest L. BLISS
Fife Lake, Mich.

Cpl.
Paul M. BUTERA
Steubenville, O.

Sgt.
Steve E. CANONICA
Butte, Mont.

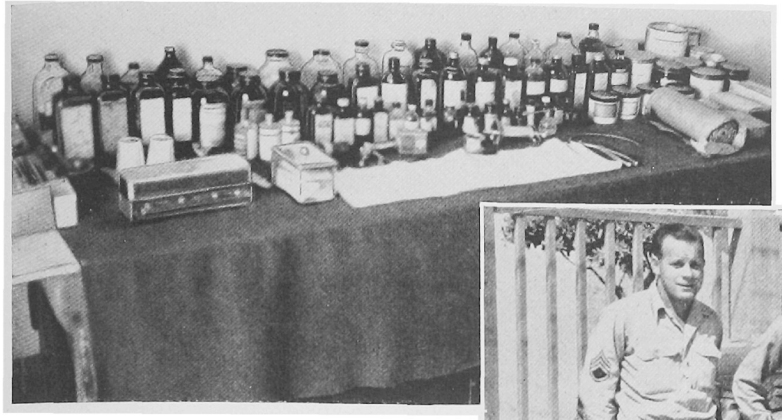
Cpl.
Michael CONSTANTINO
Ansonia, Conn.

Cpl.
Frank F. CULL
Detroit, Mich.





*Cesenatico, Italy*
*June 1945*





# *Medics*

*Cesenatico, Italy, June 1944*



Cpl.
Burton E. BALCH
Ludlow, Vt.

S/Sgt.
George W. HEATH, Jr.
North Conway, N. H.

S/Sgt.
Wilbert H. HOLLAND
Allison Park, Pa.
Soldiers Medal

Cpl.
Michael F. KOLESAR
Newark, N. J.

Pfc.
George G. PAGE
Rochester, N. Y.

Cpl.
Otto R. PEARSON
Binghamton, N. Y.



Cpl.
William M. PETTERMAN
Butler, Ga.

Pfc.
Daniel P. WHITTEMORE
Newnan, Georga

Cpl.
Raymond YAKSIC
Pittsburg, Pa.

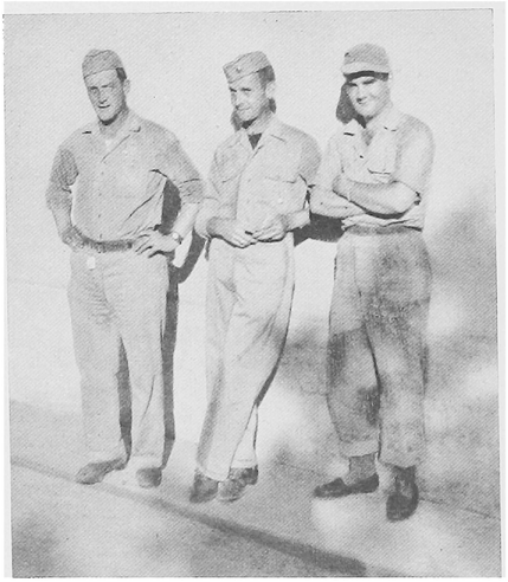
Enlisted Men of various sections whose pictures were unavailable:

Sgt. Clarence L. Herney
Cpl. Warren E. Ekas
Cpl. Lee B. Ramsey, Jr.
Cpl. Norman L. Reighard
Pvt. Ernest L. Daubel
Pvt. Antonio Leija
Pvt. Harold E. Mayer

# 85th Book Staff

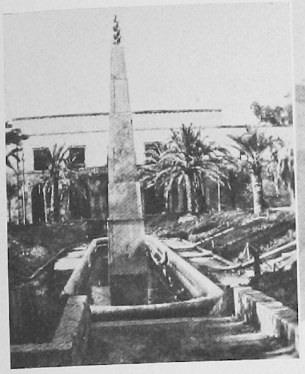


*Cesenatico, Italy, June 1945*



*Cesenatico, Italy, June 1945*

# Familiar Scenes from the Nile to the Rhone



Africa-Patio



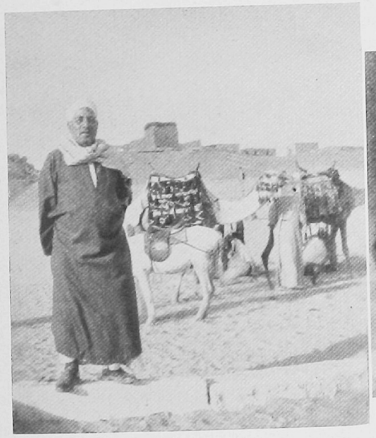
Alexandria's Shore Drive



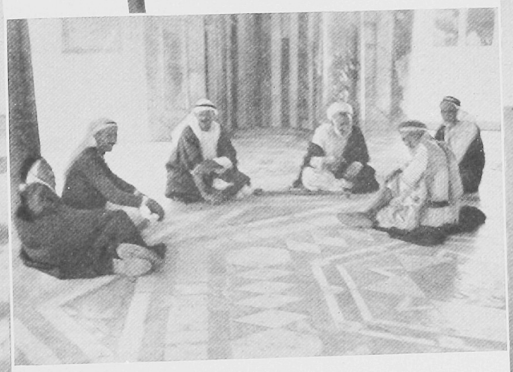
The Nile



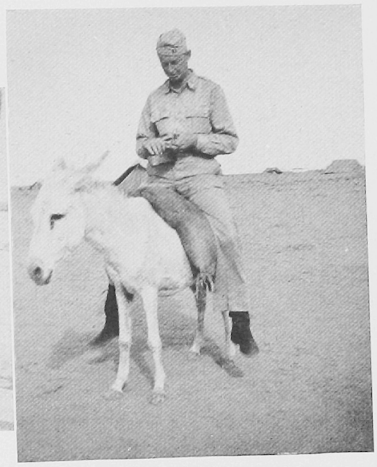

Palestine Sign-Post



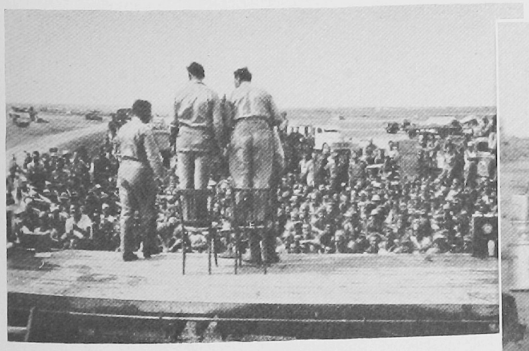
Feather-Merchant



Wog Bull-Session



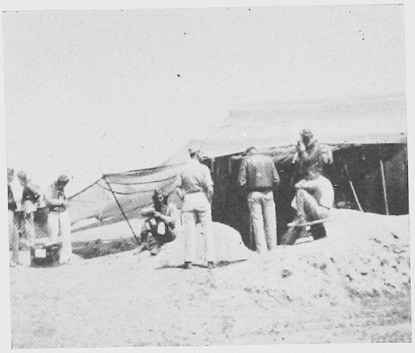
All Quiet on the Front



Desert Show Business

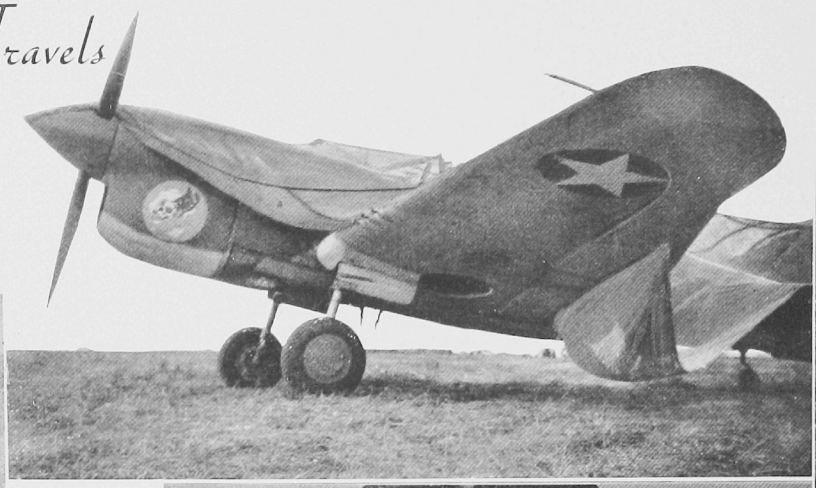


First Aid



Africa Briefing Tent

# Skullivers' Travels



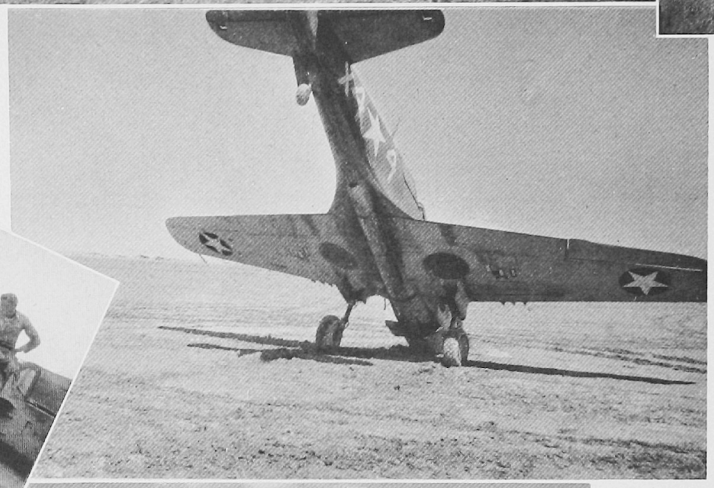
Hawk
under Wraps



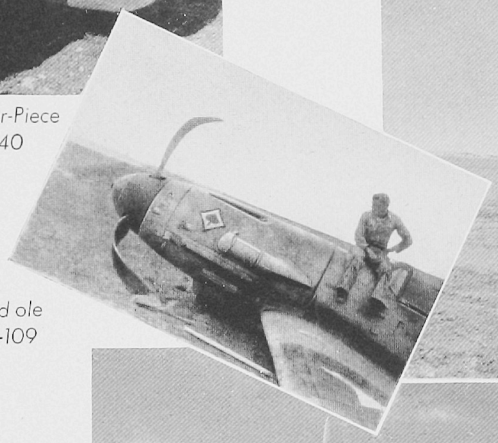
Rudder-Piece P-40



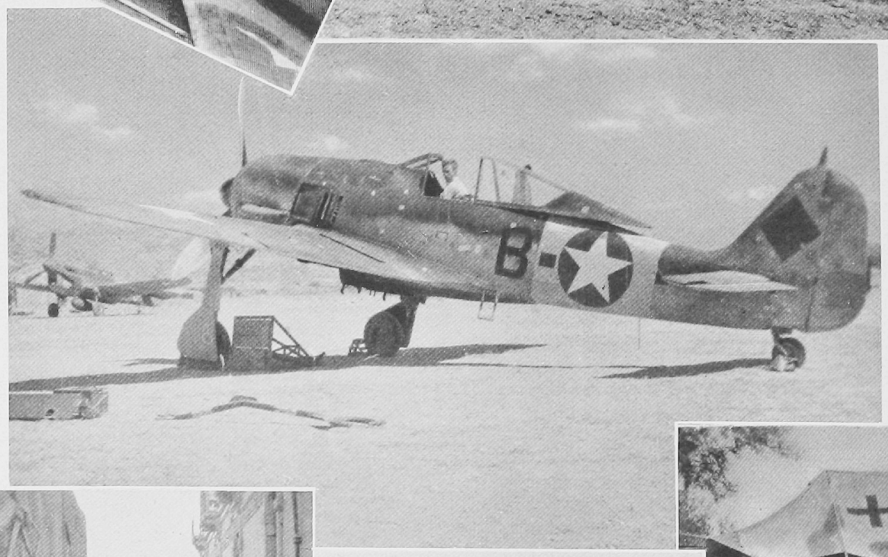
Rudder-Piece
P-40



Ostrich-Hawk
No. Africa



Tired ole
Me-109




FIW in Sicily



Dispensary, Sicily



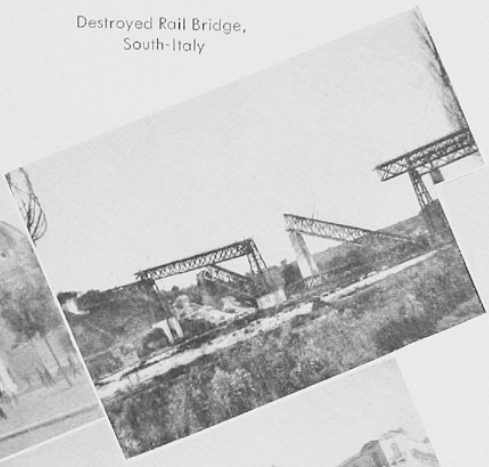

Convoy Stop, Sicily



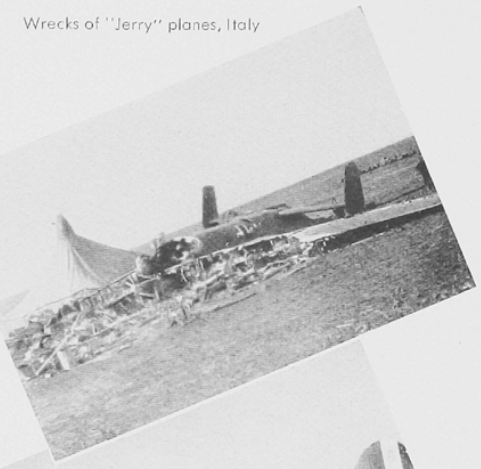
Convoy in Sicily



Church undamaged —
A rare sight in Italy



Destroyed Rail Bridge,
South-Italy

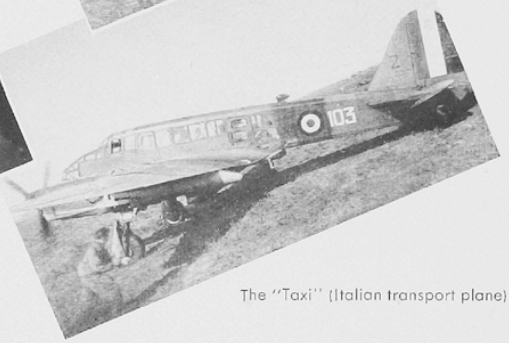


Wrecks of "Jerry" planes, Italy

## Southern Italy

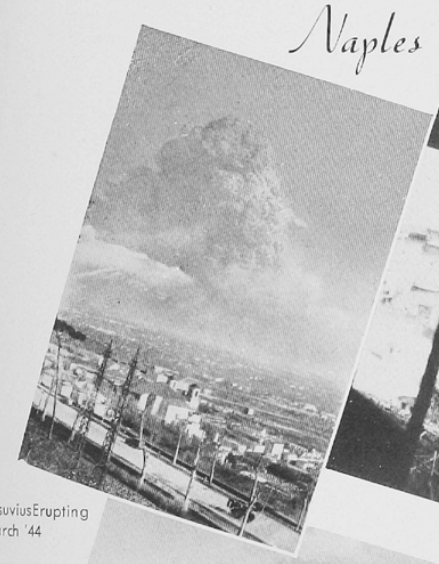


Foggia



The "Taxi" (Italian transport plane)

## Naples



VesuviusErupting
March '44



Naples Harbor '44



Out Sorrento way



Pompeii



Pompeii

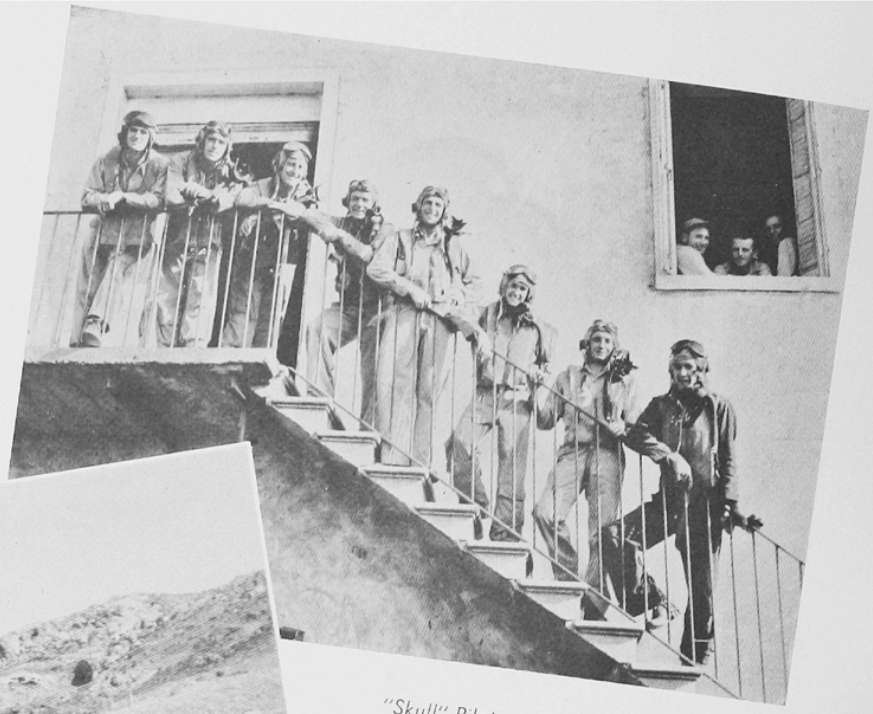


Capri

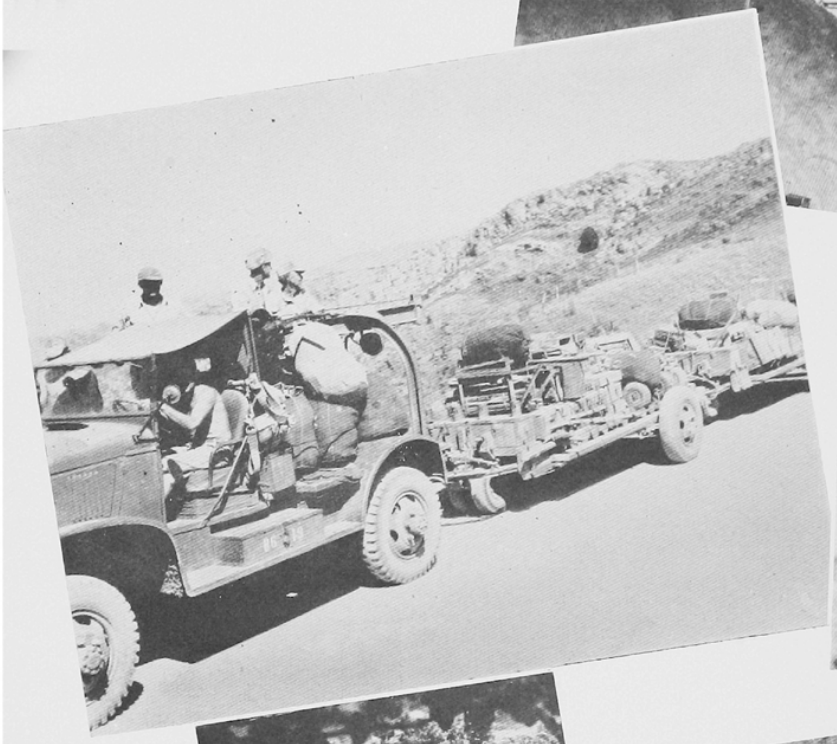


The "Finiculi-Funicular"
Capri

# Corsica



"Skull"-Pilots



Convoy to Calvi





Between Missions



Au Revoir

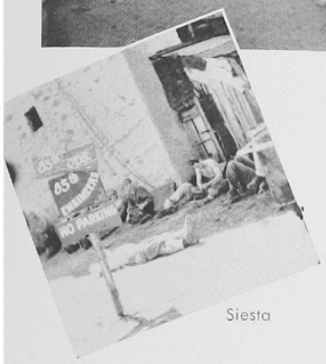


T-Bolt off for mission with belly tank, So. France



Carlton Hotel, Cannes

## France



Siesta



## Italy

Adriatic "fleet"



A "Lib" comes to grief at Jesi, victim of target flak





Winter at Fano



Jesi, Italy

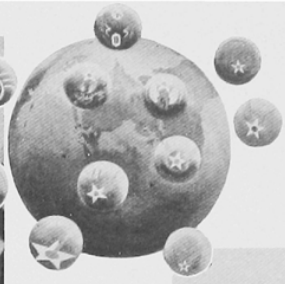


Clearing taxi-strip



B-25 Work-horse













E.M.Club



Beach beer-partie —



E.M.
Soft-Ball
Club

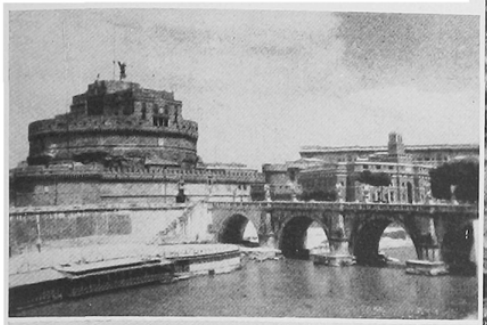




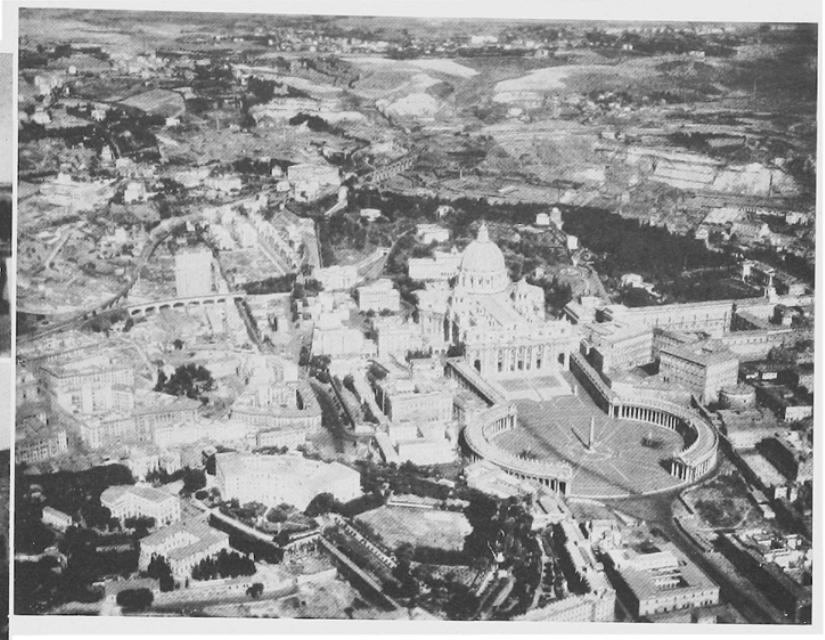


With Lt. Col. Martin foaming
at the "mike"

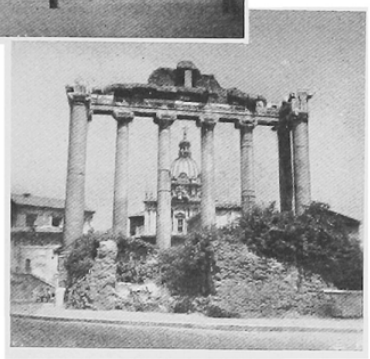
Cesenatico



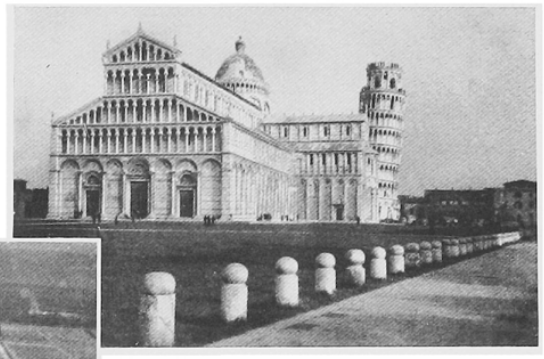




St. Peter's



Rome

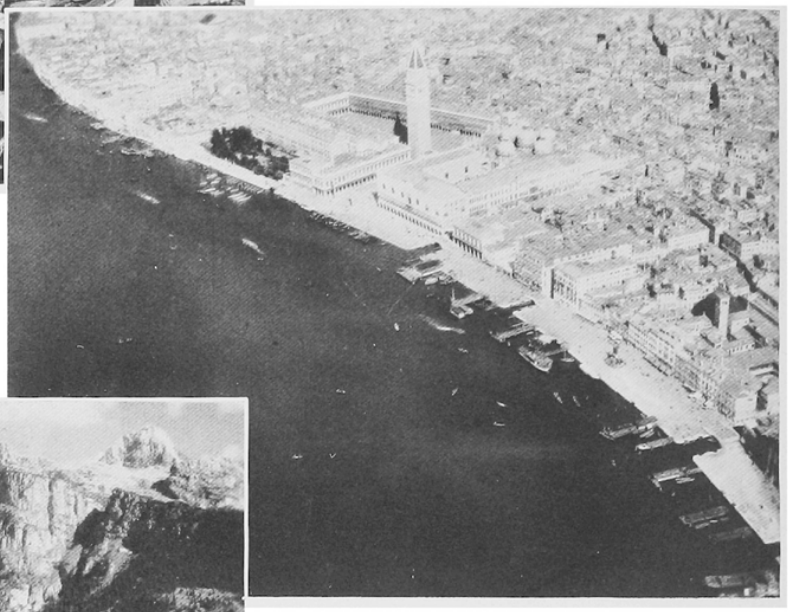




Pisa



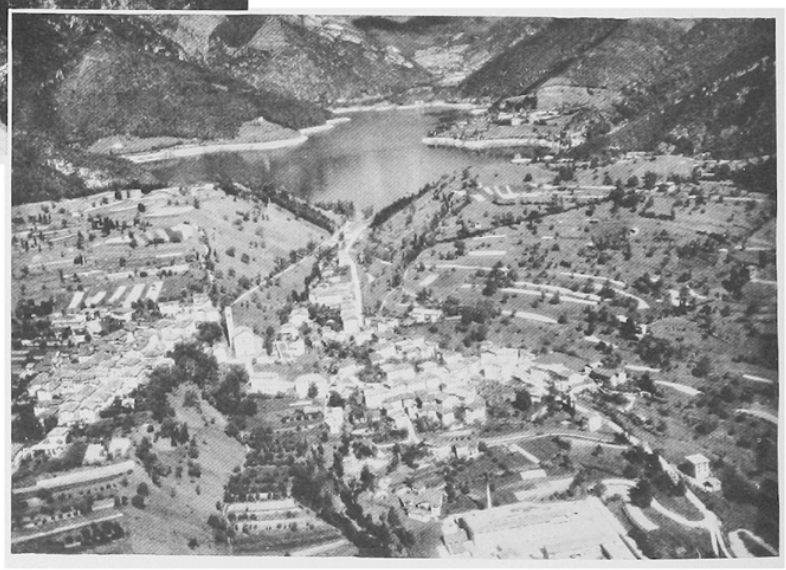
Milan



Venice



The Alps



Lake Como

# EIGHTY-SIXTH FIGHTER SQUADRON



## STORY BEHIND THE INSIGNIA

This insignia was originated while the Squadron was stationed in Egypt. The idea of using an Indian to represent the first true American in the Desert was suggested by Lt. Borsodi, with helpful ideas from various other flying officers of the organization. After the ideas were submitted, Sgt. Farquhar and Sgt. Mc Grath got busy and designed the insignia as it now stands.

The cartoon character of a Comanche Indian is set in a half circle of Air Corps blue, bordered by a bright yellow, representing the sky. The Indian is of copper color with yellow savage bracelets, and a large bow slung across his right shoulder, adding to the fierceness of his character. He is shown climbing over a white cloud, these clouds completing the lower half of the circle. In his right hand he carries a tomahawk. This is to signify the type of weapon our Squadron was using (P—40). His left arm is outstretched over the clouds and with a beckoning finger he is challenging all comers to come within his reach. The grin on his face signifies the pleasure he has had disposing of his last victim as the blood can be seen dripping from his tomahawk and the red, white and blue battle-scarred feathers waving in the breeze.

The Comanche Indians real name was Naiini which means "those that live" or "we are alive". The name·Comanche was first applied to the tribe by the Spaniards or Spanish Mexicans. The tribe is the southern offshoot of the important tribe of Shoshoni. They were singularly lacking in religious ceremonies. They obtained horses from the Spaniards and became expert horsemen and horsebreeders. They were nomads and roved the plains of Colorado and Texas expanding over into Oklahoma. They lived in wigwams made of skins and had no fixed villages. This tribe was constantly on the move, apropos of its namesake the 85th Fighter Squadron.

# As We Saw It in the 86th --

## ACTIVATION

The 86th Fighter Squadron was activated as part of the 79th Fighter Group at Morris Field, North Carolina, on 28 February 1942. The personnel, gleaned from a dozen outfits at various Army Air Corps Bases, came from many walks of life and all parts of the country. Life at Morris Field revolved about our training under direction of other units on the field, 1st Sergeant Mitchell's baseball games, and the U.S.O. club in Charlotte. We grew into a semblance of a Fighter Squadron, albeit without planes, and on 2 July we moved North by troop train to the Army Air Base at Hillsgrove, Rhode Island, prepared to take over the ships of the 66th Squadron of the 57th Fighter Group, and with our own pilots trained for the task ahead.

At Hillsgrove, three miles from Providence, we enjoyed the luxuries of barracks, modern hangars, work shop, and coke machine that "paid off". The pilots, under Captain Jack C. West, went through gunnery and dive bombing practice, and the ground crews began to develop their skills. There was also time for fun in Providence and nearby towns. During the summer, there was hardly a "spot" for miles around that did not play host to a "Comanche". An unfortunate climax occurred at the swank Cabana Club after a misunderstanding relative to the desirability of having soldiers in attendance. The Squadron, en masse, declared a private war, and sought to "wreck the joint". Nationwide publicity did little to mitigate the storm of disciplinary action turned upon the Squadron by top-ranking Army officials.

We were alerted for overseas shipment on September 27, '42. For days the men had been crating technical equipment and now "B" bags were packed and labelled for shipment. They were not seen again for a very long time. The P-40's were transfered to the 317th Squadron of the 325th Group along with many friends and comrades who went as cadre. Dutifully the men lined up for "physicals", took "shots" for everything but dandruff, and answered questions relative to attitudes towards the war and killing. To the question, "What nation or nations do you want to see win the war", "Pop" Allen answered Sweden and Albin Krezek, Poland; apparently the War Department decided the Squadron was patriotic and upon the issue of a common enemy, at least, all of the same mind.

Few of the older men of the Squadron will forget their introduction to Captain Tarleton Watkins, recently returned from a tour of duty overseas. He made his personality felt from the beginning at a memorable formation. After falling in rather sloppily, the Squadron was informed by the new "C. O." that the men were now going to become soldiers as well as Air Corps Mechanics ... Or else. Time, and later events bore him out. Soon afterward, the ground section left Hillsgrove Army Air Base for Indian Town Gap, Pa., and saw neither its Commanding Officer nor flying officers again until reunited in Egypt weeks later.

Though there was "wailing and gnashing of teeth" by the citizens of Rhode Island, specifically the fair sex, that cloudy day of 28 September when the Comanches entrained for Indian Town Gap, many a sigh of relief was emitted by the good proprietors of entertainment spots. Nevertheless, not a few left real friends, sweethearts and future wives in Providence and vicinity. No man in the Comanche Squadron ever forgot Rhode Island hospitality.

## P.O.E.

Indian Town Gap was conspicuous for lack of a planned reception; everyone hiked from the railroad station to camp. There were new faces in the line of march. Noteworthy, was a young, fresh, second lieutenant just out of "O. C. S." with a shiny new brief case tucked under his arm. It was Charles A. Pety, our new supply officer. During the next few days, the enlisted men met for the first time, or became better

acquainted with ground officers, Rice M. Terrill, Adjutant; Searcy Birdsong, Armament; Robert Laundree, Communications; William B. Rose, Operations; Philip Wright, Transportation; Edward Polak, Intelligence; and Thomas Stem, Medical Officer. "The Gap" is best remembered for "shots" administered, shortages replaced, pay received, and beer consumed at the "P. X.". After five days, we boarded a troop train and spent the night traveling to Newport News, Va., Port of Embarkation, to board the Mauretania,—her initial voyage carrying American Troops.

Most of the Comanches were quartered in the Ship's Lounge, and agreed it was a gross misnomer. It was a cubicle, crowded to bursting with wooden bunks stacked three deep. Pfc. Marland complained he couldn't turn over without flailing the man in the bunk opposite. Ship's crew and Port stevedores spent a day loading military equipment, fifteen minutes loading food, and an entire night loading cases of Pepsi-cola. Not without trepidations, we sailed out of the harbor on the morning of 7 October 1942.

Destination rumors were rife—everyone had a pet theory. The zig-zag course of the Mauretania, traveling without escort, didn't facilitate guesses any. Against the "U" Boat wolf packs roving the South Atlantic, the ship's only protection was speed. 1st Sergeant Mitchell was on deck twenty-four hours a day with life preserver and binoculars as self-appointed lookout. Nothing bothered "Junior" Young, busy making a killing on his Pepsi-Cola and ham sandwich concession.

### "RIO"

Eleven days, and twenty-two meals after leaving Newport News, Va., Rio De Janeiro, Brazil was sighted. One "Hopeful" predicted our disembarkation there, because he had seen the Squadron's bags loaded aboard last. By then, most men had "had" the Mauretania, its quarters, its two meals per day, the basis of which were cold fish and salt pork in the morning; boiled potatoes in the evening.

All agreed that Rio deserves its title of "the most beautiful harbor in the world". Rolling, green hills swept into infinity from sentinel-like Sugar Loaf Mountain at the bay entrance. By night the flickering neon lights of cabarets and beer "ads" gave mute promises which tantalized the thirsty and bored Comanches. A Brazilian Destroyer discouraged anyone tempted to swim ashore, by circling constantly the two days in port.

As the Mauretania steamed out of Rio, the most unimaginative Comanche had concluded it was destined for the Middle East or India by way of South Africa. A few days out, mountainous waves and bitter cold weakened spirits and stomachs of the hardiest. To put a keen edge on nerves, the ship's gun crew habitually fired practice salvos without warning. More than one man, lifted off the deck by a terrific roar, convinced that this was "it", attempted to tear down hatchways and bulkheads to reach the life boats. Eleven days out of Rio, two South African Gun Boats picked up the Mauretania and convoyed it into Durban Harbor.

### DURBAN

Shore leave at Durban, was like a release from prison and despite blackout and South African currency, no one returned disgruntled to the ship that night. Hollis Hall returned early. He and an eight foot Zulu collided in a dark alley; both whirled and sprinted in opposite directions. It is suspected that Hall "took to drink" shortly afterwards.

Steak, eggs, and ice cream were first on everyone's list, to revitalise for the hungry journey to Egypt. Most memorable experience was the first ride in a rickshaw, drawn by giant Zulus, heads decorated with horns and feathers like American Indians. Joe Golden and Edgar Boone organized a race which came to a regrettable end. The two "characters" grabbed the spokes of either wheel, came to an abrupt stop, and sent their Zulu flying forward through the air.

Forty-eight hours at Durban proved too short but after one "dry run" when threatened by a "U" Boat in the vicinity, the Mauretania sailed North in the Indian Ocean, through Mozambique Channel, where one night we saw the flashes of the guns on Madagascar heralding the final days of the battle there. Thence to the Gulf of Aden and through the Red Sea to arrive 12 November 1942, at Port Tewfik, Egypt.

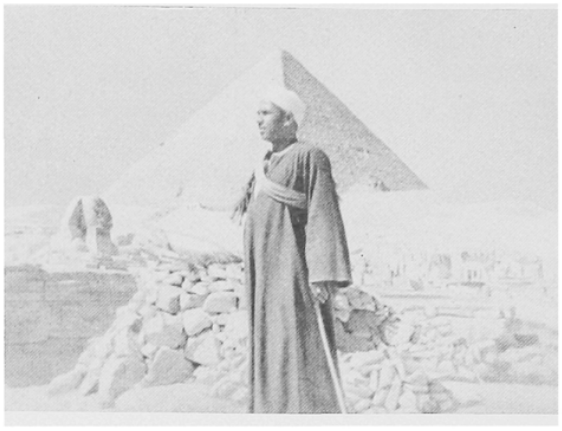
### EGYPT

As the men of the 86th rode from the Mauretania to the docks under a blistering sun, they noted with groans, great barren cliffs of sand and stone rising out of the sea. At "Pilgrims' Station", terminus for moslems on pilgrimage to Mecca, we boarded small

uncomfortable Egyptian fifth-class coaches for a short ride North along the canal, through the city of Suez to a Royal Air Force Depot at Kassfareet on the edge of Bitter Lake. It was hot as we stumbled along with our bags and the Southerly Khamsin wind was already beginning to whirl deep sand, forerunner of a "beautiful" sand storm that lasted two days. Kassfareet had rows of small billets in which we slept five to a building, on cement floors. Because R.A.F. rations consisted primarily of cold beans, salt pork, moldy hard tack, and the inevitable tea, all spent much time at the local NAFFI, squandering piastres (of which no one knew the value) on tinned food. We found ample time to swim in Bitter Lake, frequent the Sgt's Club, and pick up a few phrases of Arabic, the first of which was "sayeeda". "Smiley" Selmser and Bates Shuping cemented American-Egyptian relations by spending hours posing grinning "Wogs" before an empty camera, later even becoming household guests of the natives.

Shortly after arrival at Kasfareet, a formation was called by the newly promoted Major Watkins. He told of the sad loss, in action, of Col. Peter McGoldrick at Charing Cross, then disclosed the location of our first base, a former 57th Group base at El Amirya. The following day the move began by sending Mess Sgt. John Brown with a detail to the landing ground to set up a mess. Obviously, by this time "chow" had become an item of primary importance. Alerted a couple of nights later, the men groped their way, falling and swearing, through the darkness to a railroad siding, and boarded rickety coaches.

During the night, the men huddled upon the floor beneath the small narrow seats; by day, they hung out of the windows, rookie style, gaping at the natives, and blithely giving away cigarettes. "Buckshees" was

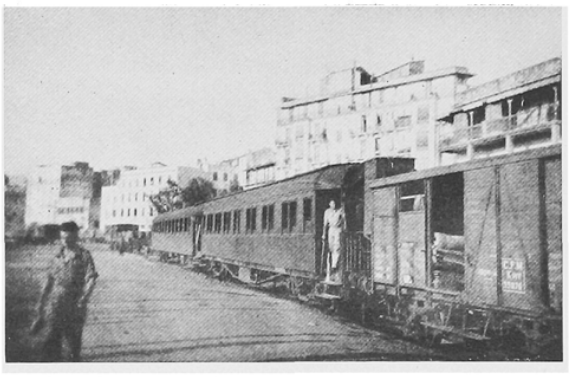


*Sentinels*

a steady chant along the route. The men lived to rue the day they were so generous with smokes.

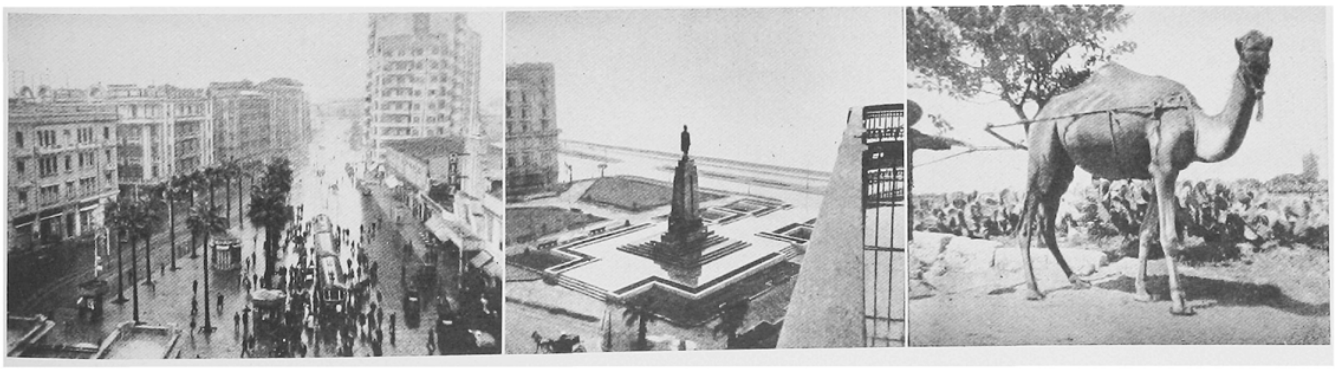
### LANDING GROUND 174

Late afternoon we reached a desert siding surrounded by a cluster of shacks, huts, tents, two or three palm trees, a collection of "wogs", and a pile of the



*Port Tewfik*

every present five-gallon gasoline tins. Led by an officious looking South African Sgt. astride a motorcycle, English trucks transported the 86th the few miles



*"Alex"*

*Kasfareet express*

through the choking sand to LG 174. Tired, hungry yanks vociferously agreed this was the most desolate looking spot on earth. Major Watkins waved a finger in various directions of the compass and instructed the set up of the camp. Although chow that evening was merely bully beef and beans, steak and eggs would not have been better received, for here at last was food they had a name for.

First week at L.G. 174, line personnel performed herculean tasks in getting into shape, with meagre equipment, the sand-gutted, well-worn P-40s that were given to the Squadron. Pilots were soon training under seasoned 57th Group veterans, and duties settled into semblance of routine. Ratings came out, putting an end to some strenuous "bucking". Sgt. John Foster replaced Sgt. Mitchell as 1st Sergeant, Sgt. Berry was put in charge of a daily slit trench digging detail that threatened to excavate a good part of Egypt, and the "battle of Alexandria" began.



*L.G. 174*

The most popular feature of L.G. 174 was its easy accessability to the varied delights of Alexandria which had just shaken off the spectre of occupation by Rommel's Africa Corps, thanks to General Montgomery's gallant 8th Army at El Alamein. Over-night passes gave every member of the Squadron an opportunity to explore its mysteries. Despite the black-out, meatless days, and shortage of many items including beer, other than the Egyptian concoction termed "Stells", Alex was a center of relaxation for battle-weary troops of almost every Allied nationality returning from the hell of "the blue". Memorable spots were Ramley Station, Mohammed Ali Square, The Fleet Club and Sisters Street.

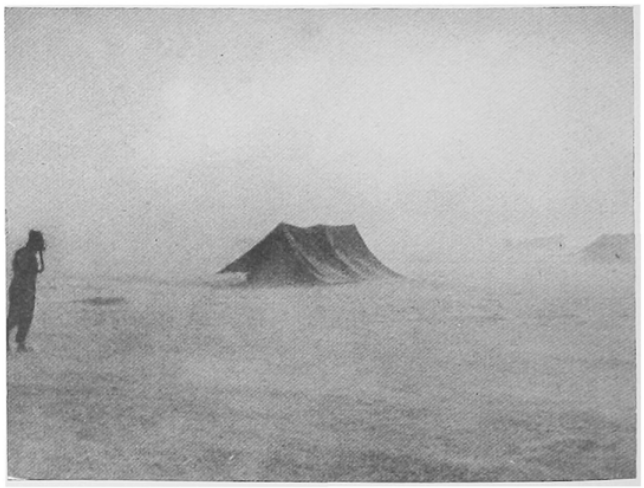
The bar and club of the 13th Hellenic, Greek Squadron flying Blenheims from a field two miles from ours, offered the more venturesome, notably Nick Risvas, an opportunity to practice Greek. Unfortunately, distance and direction in the desert, especially at night, can fool a fellow and many of the boys curled up in the sand under the stars to wait for dawn and an idea as to where the hell camp was. Long about this time a good many compasses disappeared from our salvage planes.

Christmas, 1942, in a proper setting of sand, camels and wandering bedouins! The American DC-3 Mail-Plane from Cairo had delivered one hundred cases of American beer, and this special night of the year was brightened somewhat by a party that few will ever forget.

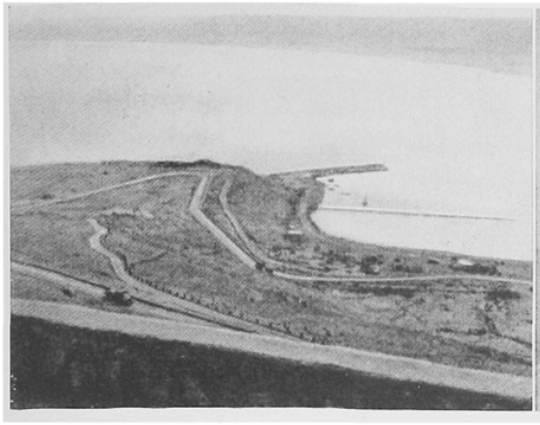
Frequent sand storms that kept the squadron in British 180 pound tents for days on end, gave Capt. Frederic J. Borsodi and Sgt. Everly McGrath time to design the now famous Comanche Insigna. "Trinidad" Hendricks spent five hours one day trying to deliver the water bowser to the mess tent which he kept missing by yards, and Cpl. Lloyd Shannon "swore off" for a week after seeing a fifty gallon gasoline drum blow up and over his tent.

### DESERT CARAVAN

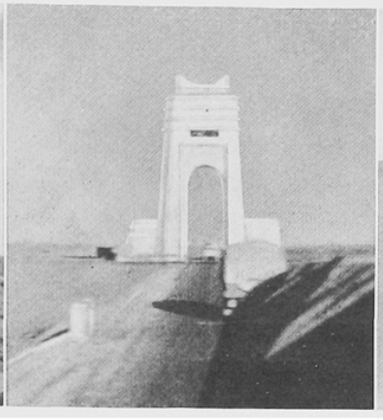
Finally, the long awaited order to "move up". As Major Watkins addressed his squadron that evening, there was the same tense excitement of that unforgettable night when told we were going overseas. "Action" at last, after tedious months of training, and the men were confident. The morning of 27 January 1943 never really dawned, and before the convoy got underway, a couple of showers brought out the G.I. raincoats. Soon we turned West off the main Alex-



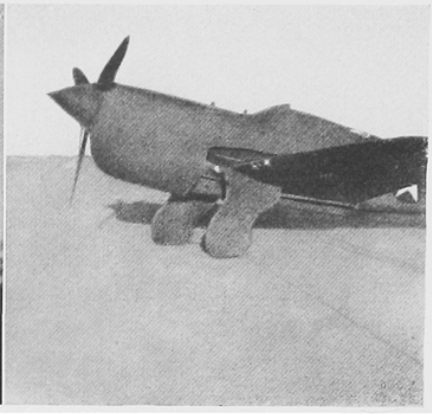
*Sandstorm at L.G. 174*



Libyan coast



Marble arch



Buttoned-up, L.G. 174

andria highway at a sign indelible now in every man's mind, a large black sign, and in white letters a foot high the words WESTERN DESERT, with an arrow pointing straight up. Whether the arrow indicated the boundless wastes to westward, or the infinity of the sky overhead, it seemed calculated to imbue a hollow sense of indefiniteness about the terrain and the future that must always be the first and most lasting impression of a tenderfoot in the desert. Soon, vivid reminders of the war: charred wrecks of vehicles barbed wire fences bearing little signs "DANGER MINES", great litters of shell casings, and a cluster of huts labeled El Alamein, symbol of the great battle a few weeks previous. Beyond were salvage yards that held hundreds upon hundreds of battered trucks, tanks, recon-cars, half-tracks, self-propelled guns, and vehicles of all sizes, both enemy and allied, then a mile-long dump of empty "petrol tins" and, irreverently in the same vicinity, interminable rows of white crosses, many our own latin cross, and many the German maltese cross. On we rolled, westward over this road that thousands of sweating South African blacks, P.O.W.'s and the ever present Royal Engineers labored painfully to keep in semi-repair. They had seen many a convoy roll past, but few had ever seen such a motley commixture of vehicles as was the 86th. British Dodges and Fords painted a desert yellow, American Jeeps and G.MC.'s in O.D., and anything else on wheels proudly bore the American white star in a blue circle. Names all had read about, like Mersa Matruh and Solum, became personal history. Then Halfaya Pass and the slow precipitious ascent into Libya, and a breath-taking vista from the top of the pass. Below to the east, Egypt and the blue Mediterranean, the long black thread of highway snaking upward, and to the westward the verdure of the Libyan coastal strip. Soon thereafter we passed a small crossroads, a hallowed spot for the 79th—Charing Cross—where Group Commander Col. Peter McGoldrick met his death in combat, crash landing in a mine field, before his Group could join him overseas.

### EL GAZALA

A few miles beyond battered Tobruk, "A" party made camp on the Squadron's first forward airfield, L.G. 150, otherwise El Gazala. The landing field was rough and stony, and the local terrain rugged. The Italians had fortified it with great numbers of underground chambers and inter-connecting passages hewn out of solid rock and our boys spent much time rummaging through abandoned equipment. S/Sgt Clyde Shay and his mountain boys had the hills ringing for a time with the four foot "Itie" sniper's rifles, but the din would have been as the patter of mice's feet had the scheme of another enterprising young lad succeeded. S/Sgt. Joe Rose was noticed one day giving unusual attention to equipment in the Armament and Communications Sections, but aroused little curiousity until he went around for a spare airplane battery, a bomb fuse in one hand and in the other a sizeable length of telephone wire. "What are you going to do Joe?" "Oh, I-ah-found a cave across the valley with a five hundred pound bomb in it and a bunch of artillery ammo stacked around. I was going to set it off, I bet it'll make a hell-uva explosion!" Fortunately the battery proved too heavy to carry two miles.

Sore, grimy and weary, "B" party reached El Gazala the evening of 14 February. Next day at dawn

the trucks were rolling westward again along the coast road, but weariness and discomfort soon dissipated as the brightness of the day unveiled a wondrous panorama. From sea level, clean green expanses of farmland swept up to the rugged mountain masses from whose crest southward stretched the Libyan desert plateau. Up ahead these mountains over-ran into the sea, and as the road took the convoy on up through them, winding through great chasms of green forest, up over peaks and ridges, the immensity and natural beauty committed all to silent awe. Descending through Derna Pass, down the sheer cliffside for two thousand feet or more the road inched downward in curves at times so sharp that truck and trailer were unable to negotiate without unhitching. From the little harbor town of Derna, the road followed the seashore endlessly until on the seventh day the convoy turned south of a dusty track leading, all felt sure, nowhere. Engulfed in a blinding dust storm, coughing, spitting and swearing we pushed on all day until a barely discernible road—Bir Du Fan—and shortly received order to unload and pitch tents. The Comanches were at their new airfield, Darraugh Main they chose to call it, and this screaming gale of stinging sand, this swirling, sleep-defying, lung-corroding, maddening rampage of elements was the finale to the week-long, back-breaking journey.

### DARRAUGH

Through five days of this hell the men struggled to carry on the routine of existence. When weather finally cleared and the planes arrived, training for combat operations began in earnest. At Darragh, most of the last obstacles to desert flying were overcome; flights and engineering prefected the technique of setting valves and performing other engine maintenance through the obscurity of blowing sand. Armament designed an improvement in the bomb shackle installations of wing-racks; and Communications men improvised a brace attachment to the antenna mast which overcame the breakage in divebombing runs.

There were lighter moments, as when "Panama", receiving a very pointed order from Maj. Watkins to "take a bath", jumped into a fifty gallon drum of water under which he had built a small bonfire, touched the searing hot bottom, and came out like a panic-stricken canary.

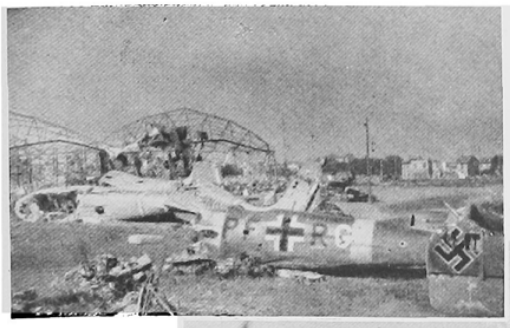
### CASTEL BENITO A/D

By the end of February, all sensed the entry into combat was imminent. The 8th Army was then held up at the Mareth Line. We moved to Castel Benito airdrome, or what remained of it, outside of Tripoli. Feeling it should once again be given to know that the Americans had arrived, we set the "shores of Tripoli" echoing with the Marine Hymn as we rolled through. Castel Benito was an oasis of green turf and evergreens,—welcome change. There was a special beauty, too, in the masses of enemy aircraft wrecked all about the field, and stacked in great gutted hangars. This foremost enemy airdrome, constructed under and named after Mussolini, had been a major base for operations against the 8th Army and Mediterranean shipping. Gratifying was the discovery of a wine factory in the neighborhood. Not exactly the nectar of the Gods; rather this "stuka juice" must have been aged with acetone; but it was alcoholic, and milk cans, jerry-cans, demijohns, clean and unclean, 80 to 100-octane petrol tins, all became "common carriers". Shuping, Harper and many others will attest to the depth of the "Itie" slit trenches that honeycombed the area.

Slit trenches recalls the $ 65,000 one that "Muffy" Juhl had to dig for the Major the day after he brought the C.O.'s Fiat G-50, gift of the British, into cataclysmic contact with X-40, Maj. Watkins' own P-40. S/Sgt. Juhl was crewing them both, and after diligent labor had succeeded in making the Italian fighter serviceable. He was running up the engine that morning, it sounded good too, when the ship started to turn and roll forward. No T.O. was there to tell him that pulling back on the throttle was opening it wide. "Muffy" bailed out of the wreck unhurt, but X-40 was severed amidship, and the fancy Fiat relegated to the "boneyard".

### CAUSEWAY—FIRST COMBAT

On 13 March we reached Causeway L.G. Tunisia, on a peninsular beach opposite the Island of Djerba. Tents were very near the water and a slit trench was of necessity no deeper than one foot unless the owner planned to swim during an air raid. Now close to the front lines, the Comanches were becoming slit trench conscious. Whereas British Ack-Ack crews managed to open up on some aircraft, enemy or otherwise, nearly every night, and many of us had not yet learned the difference between a bomb explosion and the report



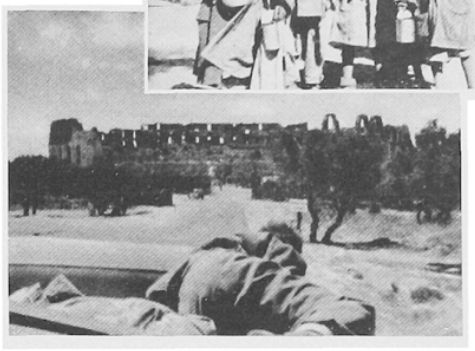
Once-proud Castel Benito



"Fans" in Tunisia



Sgt. Juhl's "Frankenstein Fiat", Causeway L.G.



El Djem Colosseum

of a heavy A.A. gun several yards away, the sides and back of the tents took a terrific beating.

Off duty time was now divided between beach bathing and searching eggs to supplement the mean diet of bully-beef. No one quite found out where the "Wogs" got their inexhaustible supply of "hen fruit", for this far on North Africa no one had seen a hen. The booming trade in eggs and Palm Wine daily saw Comanches squatted on the ground in the nearby Arab village arguing over the current exchange rate of Woodbines and "V" cigarettes with a group of tattered natives. The French village of Zarzis, several miles away, enabled the boys to become acquainted with the few, very new, Mademoiselles.

The first official combat operation of the 86th Fighter Squadron took place on 15 March 1943 over the Mareth Line from which "Monty's" Desert Army was trying to drive the stubborn Rommel.

With the piercing of the Mareth line, Comanche "A" party sped forward close behind the forward tanks to La Fauconnerie (Falcon's Nest) landing ground, on a high plateau just south of Gabes. Wrecked German planes littered the field. We arrived shortly after the enemy's departure to find tanks and equipment still burning.

After about a week we pushed off again, past the historic coliseum of El Djem, by-passed Sousse, home of the French Foreign Legion, arrived at Kairouan Landing Ground, two miles from that Moslem Holy City. This L. G. was a grassy plain surrounded by "wadis". From the tents, the Mosques of Kairouan could be seen. In the evenings while the men stood by their tent flaps watching the raids over Sousse, they were plagued by the thousand and one prevalent varieties of insects, bugs and snakes.

Kairouan was divided into two sections: French and Arab. The walled in Arab quarters, with its dirty shops and bazaars, were a constant reminder that war




Kairouan water-point



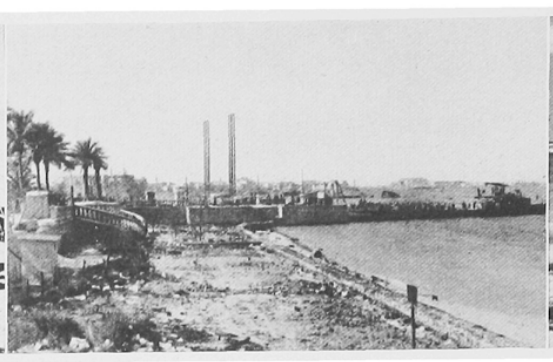
Stuka at cape-bon



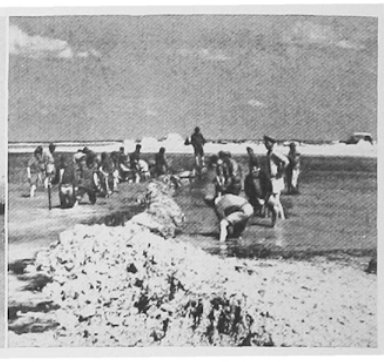
Enfidaville



Desert Rats Foster, Maj. Terrill, and Shannon



Tripoli



Causeway

might come and pass but would never touch these people. Paradoxically, the French section of the town was quite a modern village with wide shaded streets where many Comanches found time in the evening to "promenade".

AFRIKA CORPS KAPUT

With the victory at Tunis and Cape Bon there fell into Allied hands thousands of German and Italian prisoners and their equipment. Scavenging Comanches poured into Tunis and the hills behind Enfidaville, returning with trucks, cars and motorcycles that provided every man with private transportation. Fair loot also was a prodigious quantity of wine, ported in anything from barrels to belly tanks. During the following few days, swarms of enemy troops came out of the hills looking to surrender. 1st Sergeant Foster pulled a Sgt. York one afternoon by allowing, after much consideration, a truck load of "Krauts" to surrender to him.

Before long, "A" party was organized into Major Snowden's commando corps, aiming to share in the invasion of Sicily. On 31 May "B" party proceeded with the planes to Cape Bon. It was a dusty, day-long ride. The new field, a dry lake bed, sprawled in many directions. In the background, mountains, and beyond them the sea. Off shore, rocky Pantelleria, enemy stronghold, loomed out of the Mediterranean, challenging the air power poised to batter it into submission.

More remnants of the defeated Luftwaffe and inevitable minemarkers, but these didn't stop the usual Comanche "scroungers".

Tents were up, slit trenches appeared, gas bowsers "sweated out" the arrival of the planes, latrines dotted the landscape conveniently, and the intrepid "Panama" Bowers started the stoves and prepared chow from meager rations. Now a seasoned outfit, the Comanches were ready in a matter of hours to begin operations.

The planes came the first day; crew chiefs and armorers went to work; next day the show began. We bombed Pantelleria and escorted the mediums and heavies over it. Pilots and ground crew stopped only to eat and sleep. Only a few miles from their objective, the flights took off and landed like a shuttle-race, an operation that proved an impregnable fortress could be reduced by air power alone.

It was Hot. Cooks sweated inside their tents; armorers sweated while they loaded 50 caliber ammo; pilots sweated, too, but not from the scorching June heat. Beaucoup mosquitoes! Nets dropped over every cot, and to "vino-enlightened" souls they were more of a hazard than protective cover.

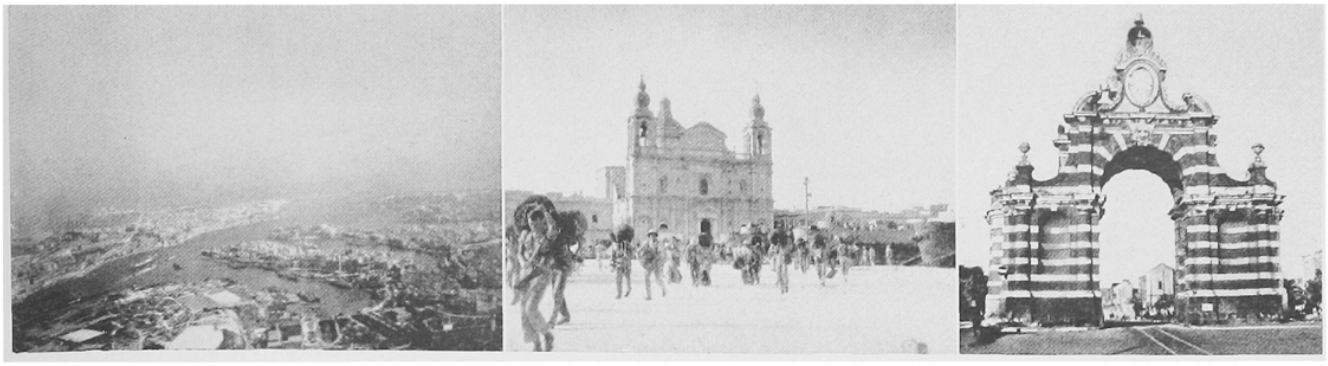
On 14 June, after two weeks constant operations against the enemy, tents were folded, trucks started on their long journey south, and the planes soared aloft. The show was over, "return to Causeway L.G."

The "commandos" of "A" party, went back along the coast to the beaches of Bou Gara for toughening up for our first amphibious venture. Soon after, Major Watkins bid us farewell and left for the "States". Capt. Borsodi took over.

After days of lectures and calisthenics among the sand dunes of Bou Gara, "A" party went to Cause-



Causeway baths



*Malta* *Catania Arch*

way L.G. for the second time to await the Squadron's planes and "B" party returning from Cape Bon. Days were spent by the two parties readying the planes for the big show, packing equipment and loading trucks.

Abruptly, an "A-prime" party, consisting of trucks and drivers left for Tripoli, port of embarkation to Malta, staging area for our landing on Sicily. Several days later, "A" party traveled the hot, dusty road to a camp on the outskirts of Tripoli to join the rest of the Fighter Groups of the Desert Air Force. Lying under their trucks in an oppressing heat of approxmately 120 degrees were Americans, Canadians, Australians, South Africans and English. Many a man's temper became shortened, sweating chow lines of a thousand men, plagued by half the flies in Africa.

## MALTA

One morning the Comanches rode to the Tripoli docks. As we staggered aboard L.C.I's under a barracks bag, rifle, helmet, musette bag, two hundred rounds of 30-cal. ammo and a two gallon can of water, many wondered if we were going to invade Sicily single handed. Twenty-four hours lying on seaswept decks with a diet of "K" rations brought us on July 4th to rocky Valetta Harbor, probably the most bombed spot on earth at that time. Despite the real destruction, heavily populated Malta was a refreshing change. As the men rode in civilian buses through the narrow ancient streets of Valetta and Musta up into the hills on the other side of the narrow Island, they whistled or gaped at the alarming array of feminine pulchritude that lined the sidewalks.

Because the Malta visit was a period of waiting, duties were light and diversions many, if expensive. Saint Paul's cathedral, catacombs at Rabat, Rocky Vale dance pavalion at Sliema, and Strait Street, or the "Gut", at Valetta held enough varieties to satisfy the most jaded. The 86th did not leave Malta without casualty. Cpl. Red Morell, intending a refreshing dip in a nearby irrigation pool one dark night, mistakenly chose an empty well, but after a twenty foot dive to the dry bottom, ended up with but a sprained ankle and a surprised expression. To further illustrate the "luck of the Irish", Sgt. Joe Golden stepped off the road near camp and rolled half way down the mountain of jagged volcanic rock with injury only to his ego. Both "characters" were heard to mention something about "never touching the stuff again".

## SICILY

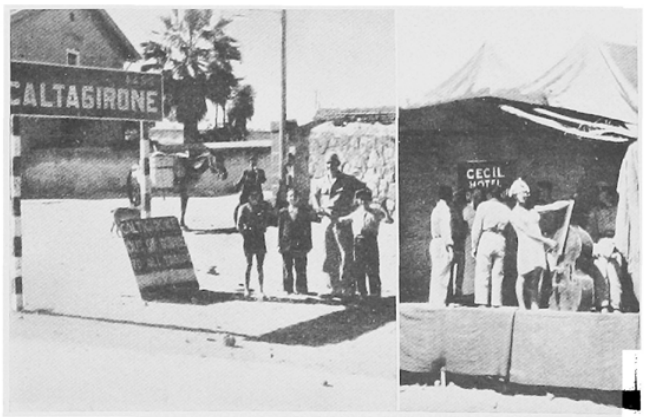
On 10 July 1943, the Allied invasion of Sicily began. One week later, members of the 86th stepped off British L.S.T.'s at the well "clobbered" port of Syracusa under the curious eye of several hundred German prisoners, one of whom was heard to wonder out loud in English "what in the hell a couple of guys named Klausen and Muller were doing in the American Army".

In an orchard near Augusta, midway between the coast road and the sea, the "A" parties of the three Squadrons of the 79th Group spent twelve blissful days lying about eating melons, and thirteen sleepless nights in prayer as the aroused Luftwaffe poured its bombs upon the ports of Augusta and Syracusa on either side of camp. Between expended flak raining down and Jerry's bomb run over our heads, there were moments when we were willing to foresake the green hills of Sicily for hot, sandy, but safe Africa. Our only "casualties" resulted from a delayed action, 1000-pounder that exploded some two hundred yards from our noon

chow line. T/Sgt. Doyle did a full gainer with a half twist into a thicket from which he emerged looking as though he had tangled with a wild cat; T/Sgt. Douglas "augured in" from the top of a truck, and Cpl. Nordin was caught in the latrine.

Because it did not look as though the British 8th Army was going to capture an airfield from which we might operate soon, we went south to a field newly-cut from an olive grove several miles t'other side of Syracusa. There at Cassibile, "A" party received the planes from Africa, and a few days later, "B" party. On the morning of the arrival of "B" party, while "A" party stood about them "dishing" a beautiful "snow job" on the rigors of the first days and nights in Sicily, a German ME-109, as if to emphasize the story, came over at about thirty feet and sprayed men and planes with lead. Not satisfied with one pass, the hun returned a moment later to finish the job. Ah, but this time we were ready for him. In the interim, forty slit trenches to an approximate depth of five feet had been dug; Sgt. Kresel had unpacked his trusty springfield with which he opened fire on the jerry, succeeding in riddling the cab of a nearby truck. Captain Van Fleet gave a beautiful exhibition of "buck fever" by following the plane in the sights of his Tommy Gun but never firing a shot. He was soon freely informed it was necessary to pull the trigger.

D.A.F. soon notified us that British Engineers had built a field near Palagonia. The truck ride there followed a tortuous road, across deep ravines to a now famous cross-road named "Dead Horse Corner", where members of the Squadron, perched high on heavily loaded vehicles, looked down upon the fighting raging on the plains of Catania. The convoy turned left to worm its way inland for about an hour to enter a broad green valley with Mount Etna and the German lines looming in the Northeast.




*Left: Sicily. Right: "Comanche Capers", Palagonia*

At Palagonia L. G., the officers and men, when not dashing off to paint red the town of Caltigirone or Piazza Amarina, found time to develop their respective clubs and to write and produce an all Comanche stage show. The Enlisted Men's club consisted of three pyramidal tents, with a well stocked bar supervised by "Honest Tom" Toaddy. The "Comanche Capers" featuring the golden voice of George Drolshagen and antics of Cpls. Phil Brenner and Rudy Bishop, proved a howling success under direction of Lt. "Grandma" Bedford. Nevertheless, the daily pass truck to Caltigirone held priority interest. From the staid, sober,



*Olive grove bivouac, Taranto*

shiny group of soldiers that left each morning, each bound for his own private club, there returned in the evening, a completely "snafued" group of G.I.'s.

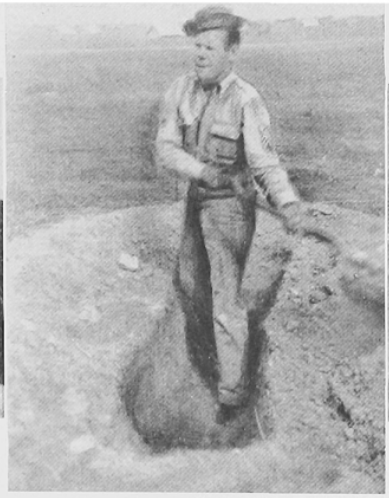
The battle was over, Italy had surrendered, and the Comanche Squadron had participated in its third campaign. (At the time little thought was given to battle stars and their significance). Few realized that our next phase would be just as trying as the desert campaign. On 13 September, the Squadron's mongrel convoy left Palagonia landing ground and passed the Gerbini airfields near Mount Etna, scene of bitter fighting against concealed German artillery positions which the Comanches had helped to destroy. They were now symbolic of air power's contribution to German defeat in Sicily.

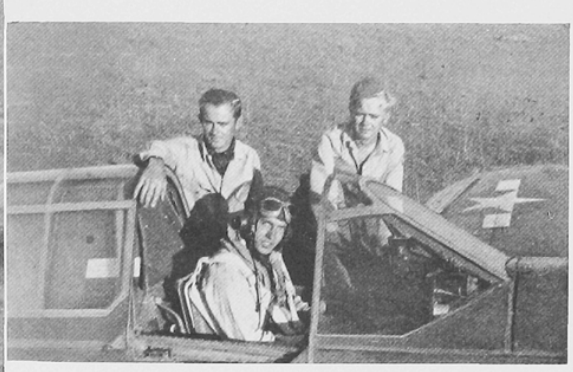
ITALY

Surviving the rocky, winding Sicilian roads, we arrived at Messina. Air bombardment had reduced its modern buildings to rubble and hollow skeletons. The



Near Pisticci L.G.

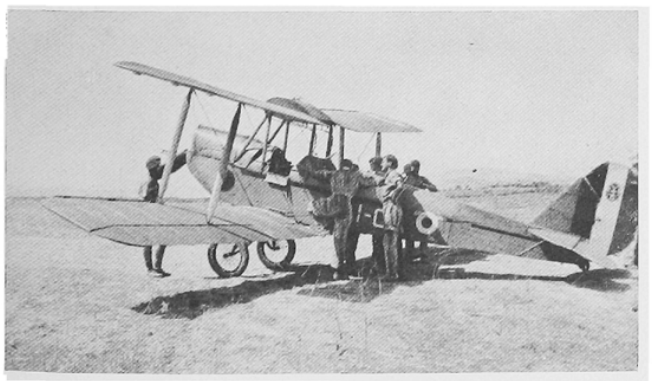




Left: Ray Allen playing safe at Foggia No. 3.
Above: Pilot and Crew comparing notes at Foggia No. 3

hop across the Straits of Messina on L.S.T.'s was without incident and at long last we reached the mainland of Europe. From Reggio Calabria, we threaded around the sole of the Italian Boot to Isola Landing Ground, near Crotone, a chalky layer of dust upon our faces from the powdery roads. Here we were visited by Jack Benny and his troupe, first U.S.O. show to perform on the mainland of Italy.

"B" party stopped briefly at Firmo L.G. and enjoyed bathing in an icy stream. The Squadron re-united at Pisticci L.G., below Taranto. Except for nightly hordes of mosquitoes there were few discomforts. We were served British Compo Rations, which turned out to be excellent fare. At Pisticci, Sgt. Joe Kriemelmeyer's hair turned gray. A half-mile from camp with a load of M/T gasoline on his 15 cwt, he passed a British truck going the other way. Suddenly a terrific ex-



Italian Heirloom

plosion, and Joe bailed out of the still rolling vehicle mumbling incoherently "open up them pearly gates!" The British truck had struck a tank mine and lost its posterior component. Joe, after the first uncertain check up, discovered he was whole and no one injured.

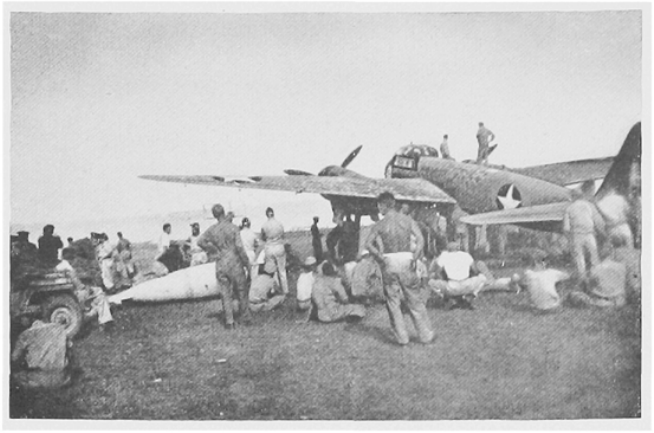
From Pisticci to Pennypost L. G. at Cerignola, via Bari and Barletta was a grand parade. The people lined the streets cheering and waving, and our "heroic" G.I.'s riding atop the trucks were decorated with clusters of grapes and cherries tossed them by the exuberant Italians. The boys found liberal amounts of champagne at the fantastically low price of thirty lire a bottle. Liberating was a good business.

At Pennypost the Squadron received high commendation from Field Marshal Montgomery for exceptional work done at Pennypost. The glory of the moment was paid for, however, by the death of one of the finest and best loved mem of this organization. On that day's final mission, which he volunteered to fly, Lt. Henry P. Steele lost his life.

Here at Pennypost we got our first taste of the rains and mud of Italy. During one of these downpours men of the advance party made a short stay on a tentative landing strip at San Severo, but the position proved untenable when foxholes and slit trenches became drainage wells, and the British Desert Tents refused to stand up under this very different treatment. So, it was on to Foggia.

Foggia airfield No. 3, later rechristened Sal Sola L.G., saw the Comanches absorb the drudgery of living in a continual down-pour, as everything they owned gradually settled into the mud. Crew chief Alex Juhl distinguished himself by adding a third cluster to his German Iron Cross with Diamonds and Swords, awarded him by his respectful comrades-in-toolkits. Taxiing his P-40 from the parking area to the radio shack for new installations, not quite attaining flying speed, he struck a chuck hole and lost a landing gear strut plus a wing tip.

Some of the boys found time to reconstruct one



*"Junk-heap 88", Foggia No. 3*

JU-88 of many lying about. No sooner had the task been accomplished and we had begun to envision a "Comanche flying likker lorry", when higher headquarters leered down on us and took possession of our beloved "Junk Heap 88" in the interests of science. So, on 19 October, midst great hand-shaking, cheering and back slapping, Major Borsodi took off for Wright Field, U.S.A., with the weight of several hundred autographs and uncensored messages covering its DEUTSCHES FABRIKAT fusilage. From Foggia, our roaming romeos first began their far flung operations over the length and breadth of Italy. Five day passes were initiated to Naples and Sorrento, and if it was not the sight of well dressed, sophisticated city girls then surely it was the strange sight of white helmeted American M.P.'s that most startled the fellows.

From Foggia area to a sodden coastal stretch below Termoli, called Madna L.G., often deliberately misspelled "Muda". The rains came and the mud flowed, yet the Squadron operated off its up-hill runway, for with that amazing product — American P.S.P. — there was no weather too foul in which to call us out. Since that time, our first introduction to steel mats, the Armies have cause many times over to bless and we to curse American inventiveness.

During this period of bitter Italian winter, the full effect of the long desert trek and poor rations made itself felt. Malaria, Jaundice, Influenza cut a wide swath through the outfit, and many a staid character had to resort to the medicinal qualities of locally produced cognac and brandy to survive the rigors of those months. Subsquently, we were obliged to turn in our tired and true desert tents for the much larger and draftier American Pyramidals—roomier, but more room in which to be cold and uncomfortable, and so there were few regrets when in mid-January we moved to Bella Napoli.

## NAPLES

The entire Squadron was housed in buildings for the first time since 12 November 1942. In Naples, the men found real entertainment in the form of good movie houses, civilian "leg" shows, or a good symphony. Dances were occasionally held in both the enlisted men's and officer's clubs. Red Cross girls often served coffee and doughnuts to the boys for their evening meal and after chow they would join them in an evening of entertainment.

Biggest event for the enlisted men in Naples was the dance held on 20 April. With American WAC's and their English counterpart the ATS girls, for dancing partners, a tired, happy Squadron retired in the wee hours. Surprisingly, no one reported for sick call that day; evidently the dance cured all ills but nostalgia.

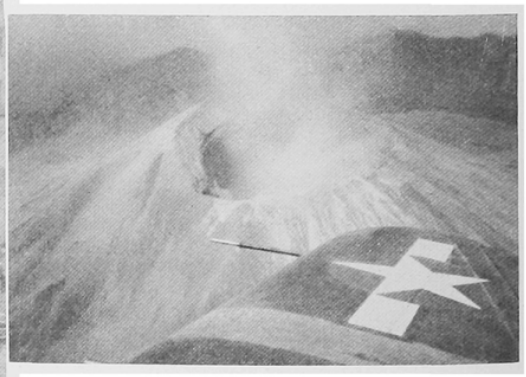
On 23 March the restless Vesuvius suddenly flared up belching lava and smoke high into the Neapolitan skies. No lava fell on the city itself, but several towns



*Madna L.G.*



*Naples Transient Billets after Luftwaffe visit*



*Vesuvius' cone*

at the base of the mountain were buried by the lava streams. The nearby countryside was heavily covered with cinders which literally rained from the sky. Traffic on some roads was blocked for days while many persons and animals were injured by the falling debris. Axis Sally proclaimed it a victory for the Germans. Just as suddenly as it erupted, Vesuvius calmed down and life returned to normal.

## CORSICA

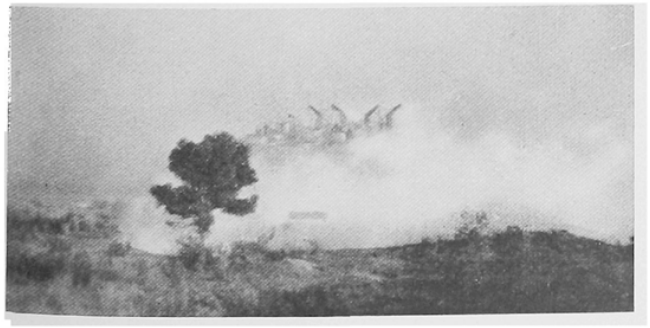
On 17 June 1945, the ground echelon bid farewell to Italy and departed for Corsica. The air echelon had left on 11 June 1944. The L.S.T. docked on 19 June at Porto Vecchio; next day found the Squadron in convoy to Serragio Airdrome.

The first impression of Corsica was the rugged coastline with its background of sheer mountains dotted here and there by beautiful little villages. After five hours on the road the convoy reached Serragia, 15 miles south of Bastia. That afternoon was devoted to setting up camp areas and swimming in a nearby river, turning said river slightly brown.

Socially, Corsica wasn't much of a success. Both officers and EM had their clubs, but the only activites were an occassional binge, and the usual games of cards and galloping dominoes. The natives had their own villages dances, but they were not too popular. At the Officers' Red Cross weekly dances in Bastia, there was a definite shortage of women.

15 August was "D" day in Southern France, with the Squadron actively participating. The invasion was an unprecedented success. Could it be that we would find ourselves on the way home soon?

On 21 August, "A" party left for France, the promised land. "B" party departed eight days later. By 30 August, both "A" and "B" parties were firmly established under tents near St. Raphael, France. We were operating from a hastily constructed airdrome reminiscent of the desert days of dust and sand. We were barely established when a move was "on" for Montelimar. The trip north of Highway No. 7 was uneventful until suddenly just south of Montelimar, "A" party saw the results of our strafing attack on the fleeing German columns. The roads were littered with vehicles of every description; abandoned uniforms of almost every rank, and a terrible stench was mute testimony of the powerful air attacks in which the 86th Squadron prominently participated.



*San Raphael Smoke-screen*



*Montelimar road*

## C'EST LA GUERRE

Overjoyed people everywhere gave "A" party a hearty welcome. At Montelimar, orders came to continue the move north to Valence. The Germans were retreating hastly and the roads were littered all the way to Valence. A flooded Rhone River had to be forded as no bridge had yet been constructed. Valence came intosight and what a sight! Ready to greet the Infantry, every single man, woman, and child was lined up in the main street of Valence. They greeted instead a tired, sweaty but happy "A" party of the Air Corps. Everyone shouted themselves hoarse in welcome of ther liberators. Beautiful French girls climbed into vehicles to kiss both cheeks of our heroes in the true French fashion; joy and good cheer predominated everywhere. On 5 September, "B" party arrived. The enlisted men settled down in tents while officers located an abandoned farm house to call "home".

The social season was in full swing for both officers and enlisted men. Monday, 4 September, was Labor Day in the U.S.A. and Independence Day in France. The Squadron turned out en masse to help the French celebration in the streets of Valence, culminating in a street-dance at night. All were genui-

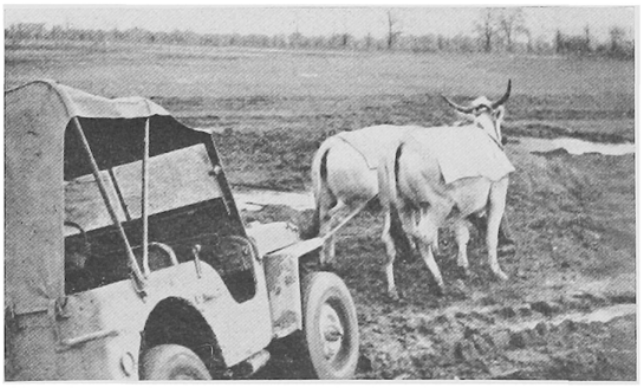
nely glad to have the Americans for their guests. The officers held a dance at their farm house on 9 September. Many civilians turned out, including a number of FFI officers with insatiable appetites and a great thirst for American whiskey.

By 15 September, the bombline took a crazy jump northward and "A" party jumped with it. It arrived at Bron airdrome, Lyons, the afternoon of the same day and again the enlisted men set up a "wog" city; the officers with the help of the Mayor of Bron billeted themselves in a beautiful French Villa and immediately set up a bar which was destined to be famous. Beer and liquor were easily obtained from nearby Lyon and while weather kept flying to a minimum the "whiskey front" kept spirits sky high.

### AU REVOIR—BON GIURNO

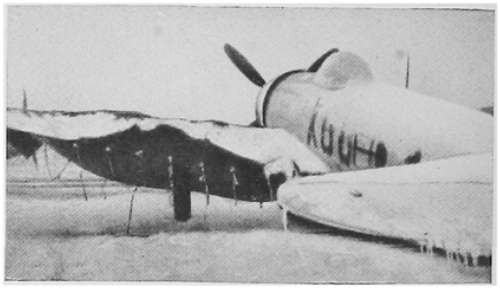
Memorable days! Lyons was hardly scratched by the war, civilian theaters and cafes were open every night, the French were friendly. What more could a nostalgic G.I. ask for? "B" party unfortunately never got to Lyons, but were ordered to Le Valon airdrome to stage for a move back to Italy. They arrived at Le Valon 22 September, thence to Septemes on the 29th and finally arrived at Jesi, Italy on 10 October. On 3 October, "A" party left by air to the new destination; "B" party left two days later from Marseilles by L.S.T. for three days of rough sailing. There were plenty of sick "land lubbers" when the L.S.T.'s docked at Leghorn three days later. The following day we reached a staging area outside Leghorn. A few lucky men were able to visit the Leaning Tower of Pisa a few miles away.

On 9 October, the convoy left Leghorn for the trip across the Appenines, and after an all day trek in a driving rain over mediocre roads reached on overnight camp 25 miles from Arezzo; next day, in a pouring rain, set out again, reaching Jesi airdrome long after dark with stragglers coming in all night. Instead of happy smiling faces, clinging, yellow mud greeted us at Jesi. Camp was set up in a quagmire, the worst area the Squadron had ever lived in. For two months the Squadron existed in the Jesi swamps, the mud getting deeper and deeper each day until it became a major task to move vehicles about.



*Oxen to the Rescue*



*Fano Winter*

Social activites in "Mudville" were zero for both officers and men. The men, more fortunate this time, had a club under a roof in town where one could drown his gloom. Officers limited extra-curricular activities to card and "crap" games and to an occasional "all night framas" when numerous hand grenades would be sown about the countryside just to hear the big "bang".

From Jesi to Fano—out of tents and out of mud—back to buildings again! At 0800 hours on 5 December, a cold rainy day (naturally!) "A" party began the 40 mile motor convoy trip up the coast. Two days later, "B" party followed.

The new Squadron area was a cluster of pink stucco bungalows of two to three rooms each. Though devoid of plumbing facilities, they were fairly clean,

and after trucks had moved the protesting "Ities" out, there was sufficient housing for all the men. The officers were billeted in a castle. For several days, until their kitchen could be set up, they ate with the men in the back yard of a bungalow employed as temporary kitchen. Everyone ate "off the mantel",




*Egyptian "Yank" buried in Fano*

resting his mess kit on the garden wall or on top of an ex-chicken coop.

Diversion was plentiful at Fano. The group had its own theater in an abandoned warehouse, and there presented U.S.O. shows and movies. Perhaps the most popular U.S.O. troupe was the baseball players Durocher, Medwick and Nick Etten, who showed movies of the 1944 World Series and entertained all with humorous sidelight stories from their baseball careers. An amusing post script was the prank played on them by the arch practical jester, Capt. Brown, aided by Lt. Winkler and several others, in the 86th Officer's Club on the dark and rainy night of 22 December 1944. D.A.F. had its downtown theater in Fano which provided movies and occasional popular British dance bands. There were local civilian dances, and the Squadron had two good basketball teams which met all comers at the Special Service gymnasium. As usual, the most hard fought games were those between Officers and Enlisted men.

On Sunday, 17 December, a P-51 piloted by an Australian crashed on take-off, plowing through four of our aircraft. One of the two five-hundred pound bombs the Mustang carried exploded fatally injuring S/Sgt. Gerald V. Ervin, and hospitalizing five others,-a sad day for the Squadron.

Spring was approaching with April. The ground was drying. Skies showed more blue, and there was excitement ahead for this Spring of 1945 held a special significance. Men didn't have to be told that the winter line, stagnant across the width of Italy since November, was about to flare up into what should prove to be the final act in the long bitter drama begun in the desert. Many felt that the move from Fano to Ce-



*Billets and "Movie House", Cesenatico*



*"Here's to Joe, he's true blue . . ."*

*"Live Soldiers", Cesenatico*



senatico would be the last move the Group would make in the Italian Campaign.

Cesenatico, on the very shores of the Adriatic was a fashionable summer resort town for the residents of Northern Italy. But after war had ground its way north of Rimini and beyond Ravenna it left the once attractive beach-side villas of Cesentico vacant, shell pocket and begrimed.

On the 21st of March, after Canadian and New Zealand troops had vacated these villas, 79th Group moved in. Fortunately the Comanches had first choice of billets by virtue of a tossed coin. Thanks to the hard work of Major McKenzies' advance party, these billets were in good shape. Even the EM Club was near completion, the best the Comanches ever had, occupying an entire two story building. Artist McGrath contributed murals for the "Pink Elephant Room". Then there was the "Blue Room" with blue booths, tables and parachute canopy for the ceiling. A realbar, too, which had formerly graced a Fascist's club.

This location offered all the facilites of a rest camp. With the wide sand beach, the warm Adriatic, dances at the club, nightly movies on the beach, U.S.O. shows, a good tennis court—no more could be desired of an overseas Fighter Base.

Softball came into vogue again, and the usual games between officers and men. Unlike the basketball season, the officers couldn't give the men much competition. Short on hitters.




*With his Masters victorious at last, his dog-duty accomplished, "WOG" left us to join the spirits of his Egyptian ancestors*

On 9 April 1945, the big push finally came. The 8th Army, with massed artillery, tanks, and unprecedented air support, was on the move. Col. Pinkston, standing on a platform in from of two large maps, briefed the ground crews as well as the pilots that day. Every man in the Squadron felt a tinge of excitement, a rejuvenation of spirit. Newspapers back home would write something about the "forgotten front" again; this was the beginning of the end. All day long heavy bombers flew overhead toward the front lines, little more than ten minutes flight from Cesenatico. All night, guns rumbled—window panes rattled.

Close support targets and armed reconnaissance missions predominated. Strong points, houses, often no more than 200 yards from 8th Army troops, were knocked out by the Comanche Pilots, and not a bomb, rocket, nor machine gun bullet fell on friendly troops. During that month the Squadron flew 173 missions, 964 sorties from the sandy, wind-blown Cesenatico strip.

By Friday, 27 April, it was evident that operations were drawing to a close. The campaign had turned into a complete rout of the German Armies. From the 28th to the 30th of April the Squadron was off flying while the runway was being repaired. On 1 May the last operational mission was flown. Then on 2 May the great news was announced: all German forces in the Mediterranean Theater had surrendered. The job was done; difficult to believe.

It was announced on 7 May 1945 that hostilities in Europe would cease at midnight. Lest the festivites become too hilarious, all firearms were taken away from the officers and men, extra guards posted, and everyone restricted to the area. That night there were free drinks at the bar—much rejoicing, and reminiscing about the past 31 months.

May 8th—V-E DAY—was an anticlimax, since most of us had celebrated the previous night. Officers and men put on their Sunday best for a Group formation on the beach where Col. Pinkston thanked every man for the job he'd done. Later in the day, Chaplain Burgess held a Thanksgiving Service in the Group Chapel.

The big question in the men's mind:—"What Next?" Was it the Far East, Army of Occupation? Or was it the far off, mythical place called "HOME"?

THE END.

# 86TH SQUADRON COMMANDERS



LT. COL. TARLETON H. WATKINS
United States Army
D. F. C.
Air Medal



MAJ. FREDRIC A. BORSODI
West Hartford, Conn.
D. F. C. & 3 OLC's; Air Medal & 14 OLC's;
British D. F. C.

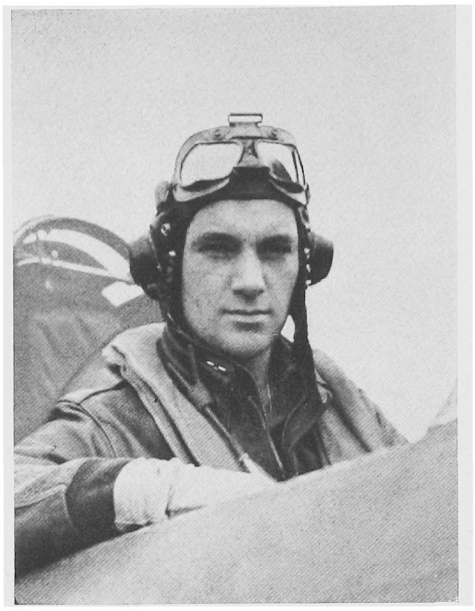


LT. COL. MELVIN J. NIELSON
D. F. C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's Purple Heart;
British D. F. C.; Croix de Guerre



MAJ. GEORGE W. EWING, JR.
San Antonio, Tex.
D. F. C.; Air Medal & 9 OLC's; British D. F. C.
Croix de Guerre

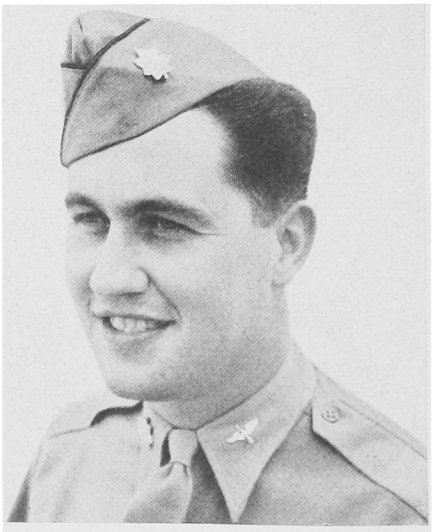
# 86TH SQUADRON COMMANDERS



MAJ. EDWARD BYRON
New York, N.Y.
D. F. C.; Air Medal & 7 OLC's
British D.F.C.



MAJ. FREDERICK J. ZILLY
New York City, N.Y.
D. F. C.; Soldiers Medal; Air Medal & 4 OLC's
British D. F. C.
Killed in Italy on second tour of duty



MAJ. ALFRED L. FETTERS
Lancaster, O.
Silver Star; D. F. C. & OLC
Air Medal & 4 OLC's; British D. F. C.

# KILLED IN ACTION

2nd Lt. James Anderson, Jr.
2nd Lt. Calvin J. Arnold
2nd Lt. Stuart L. Bartlett
2nd Lt. John H. Bothe
2nd Lt. Arthur E. Burnap, Jr.
S/Sgt. Gerald V. Ervin
Capt. Jack C. Fortune
2nd Lt. Bob Guillebeau
1st Lt. James F. Hannon
1st Lt. William D. Hanson
1st Lt. Loren E. Hintz
2nd Lt. Charles H. Kehr
1st Lt. Ober N. Leatherman
2nd Lt. Maurice W. Wilson
1st Lt. Daniel H. Mayer
2nd Lt. James E. Menifee
2nd Lt. Don N. Mulkey
1st Lt. Thomas P. O'Brien
2nd Lt. Robert L. Patin
2nd Lt. William E. Peters
2nd Lt. Sam Rospo, Jr.
2nd Lt. Louis T. Rouleau
2nd Lt. Frank J. Seres
2nd Lt. Michael J. Slater
2nd Lt. Robert S. Stahl, Jr.
1st Lt. Henry P. Steele
Flight Officer Vincent Wall
2nd Lt. John E. Winschell
2nd Lt. Charles W. Lownders

# MISSING IN ACTION

1st Lt. Richard Ascenzi
1st Lt. Zoltan J. Angyal
1st Lt. Perry E. Bailey
Lt. Percy E. Brown, Jr.
1st Lt. George I. Harris
2nd Lt. Robert F. Hewitt
2nd Lt. Irvin C. Hoerr
2nd Lt. Donald W. McKay
2nd Lt. Frank Newton
Lt. Thomas P. O'Brien
2nd Lt. Donald A. Richer
2nd Lt. Arthur J. Weldon
2nd Lt. Marion M. Zipperer

*"To long ages shall this hour be known*
*And slowly shall its memory, ever burning,*
*Fill this dark night of things with an eternal morning"*
*. . . Shelley*

# PILOTS



2nd LT. JAMES ANDERSON, Jr
Houston, Texas
Air Medal
KILLED IN ACTION

2nd LT. CALVIN J. ARNOLD
Southwick, Mass.
Air Medal
MISSING IN ACTION

CAPT. ALLAN Y AUSTIN
Spencerport, N. Y.
Silver Star; D.F.C.;
Air Medal & 2 OLC's; Purple Heart

CAPT. ROBERT H. ALLARD
Melrose, Mass.
D.F.C.
Air Medal & 7 OLC's



2nd LT. GUY M. ALLPHIN
Arlington, Kans.
Air Medal

1st LT. LOUIS G. BARNETT
Oklahoma City Okla.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's

2nd LT. STUART L. BARTLETT
Lapeer, Mich.
Air Medal
MISSING IN ACTION

CAPT. JOHN P. BEDFORD
Nyack, N. Y.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 7 OLC's



1st LT. WILLIAM E. BISHOP
Booton, N. J.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's

1st LT. HAROLD F. BLACK
Baynard, Neb.
Air Medal & 1 OLC

2nd LT. BASIL S. BLAIR
Air Medal

2nd LT. FRANK B. BURCH
Mooseheart, Ill.
Air Medal

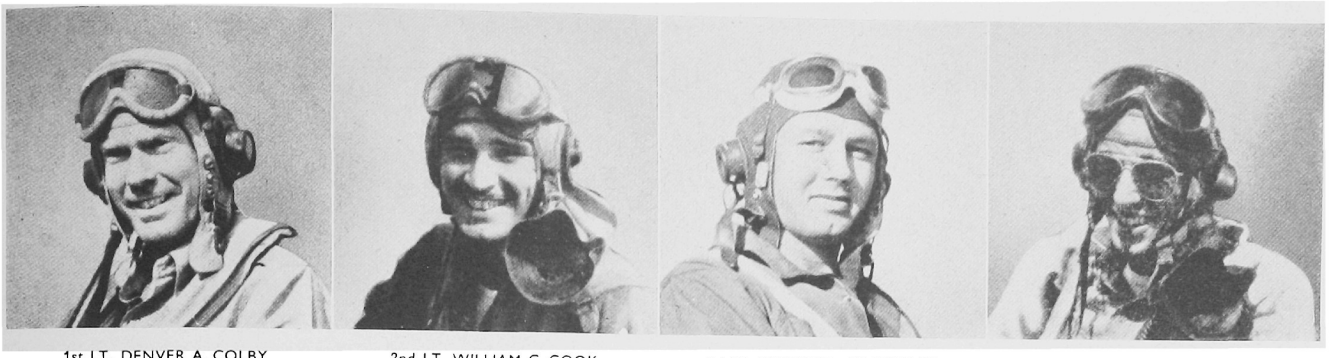


2nd LT. PERCY E. BROWN
Hanson, Mass.
Silver Star, D. F. C.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's

1st LT. LOUIS E. CHALLET
Elkville, Ill.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's

1st LT. LEONARD CHARPENTIER
Caldwell, N.J.
Returned to Zone of Interior
From M. I. A

1st LT. PAUL B. CHURCH
Crown Point, Ind.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's

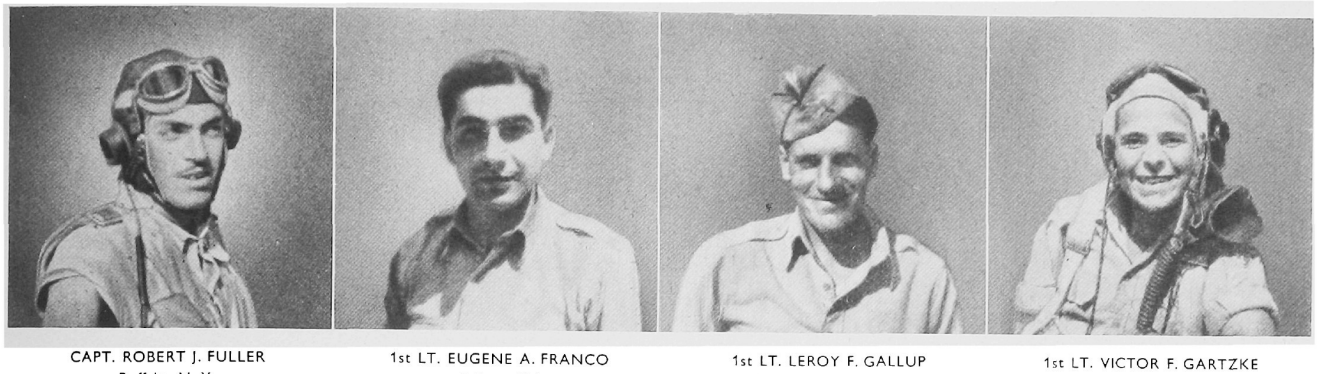


1st LT. DENVER A. COLBY
Fresno, Cal.
Air Medal

2nd LT. WILLIAM C. COOK
Tucson, Ariz.
Air Medal

CAPT. ROBERT L. CRAWFORD
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's

1st LT. RICHARD D. EVANS
Long Beach, Cal.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's
Purple Heart



CAPT. ROBERT J. FULLER
Buffalo, N. Y.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 5 OLC's

1st LT. EUGENE A. FRANCO
Salinas, Cal.
Air Medal & 1 OLC.

1st LT. LEROY F. GALLUP
Missouri Valley, Iowa
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's

1st LT. VICTOR F. GARTZKE
Milwaukee, Wisc.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. CHARLES G. GIBSON
Detroit, Mich.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's

CAPT. ALLEN GILBERT, Jr
Oakland, Ca..
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's

1st LT. EUGENE O. GILMORE
Halethorpe, Maryland
D. F. C.
Air Medal

1st LT. STANLEY J. GINIEWICZ
Lowell, Mass.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 1 OLC.



1st LT. RUSSELL E. GRAUL
Quebec, Canada
Air Medal & 2 OLC's

1st LT. SIDNEY GREEN
New York City, N. Y.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's

2nd LT. GEORGE R. GREER
Bonner's Ferry, Id.
Air Medal & OLC.
MISSING IN ACTION

1st LT. ROBERT K. GRIER
Dallas, Tex.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. DONALD W. GUILFOYLE
Providence, R. I.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's



1st LT JOHN J. GUMBLETON
Fitchburg, Mass.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's



1st LT. RAY HAGLER, Jr.
Taylorville, Ill.
Air Medal & 1 OLC.



CAPT. HAROLD HALL
Garfield, Kans.
D. F. C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's
Purple Heart



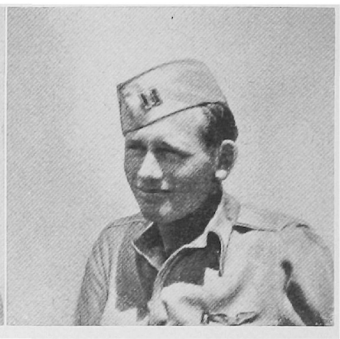
1st LT. CHARLES T. HANCOCK
Douglas, Ga.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. MALCOLM F. HAYLES
Monroeville, Ala.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



CAPT. BILLY M. HEAD
Douglas, Ga.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's



CAPT. ALFRED HEARNE
Hooker, Okla.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's
British D.F.C.



CAPT. RICHARD W. HILGARD
Bellville, Ill.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's



1st LT LOREN E. HINTZ
Glendale, Cal.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's
(Missing in Action)



CAPT. ARTHUR W. HILL
La Salle, Ill.
Air Medal



F O. BILL F. HORN
Borger, Tex.
Air Medal



1st LT. CHARLES H. HUGHES
El Paso, Tex.
Air Medal & 1 OLC.



1st LT. GEORGE E. HUNTSBERGER
Los Angeles, Cal.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. JOHN C. HUTT
Neenah, Va.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 5 OLC's



1st LT. ROBERT C. JOHNSTON
Evanston, Ill.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



1st LT. REIDY E. JONES
Green Bay, Wis.
D. F. C.
Air Medal

CAPT.
HUGH F. JORDAN
Air Medal & 4 OLC's



2nd LT. CHARLES H. KEHR
Westville, N.J.
Air Medal
KILLED IN ACTION



CAPT. JOHN C. KELLY
Newark, N.J.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 7 OLC's



1st LT. HENRY W. KENT
Jacksonville, Ill.
D. F. C.
Air Medal



1st LT. ERNEST E. KOONS
Bowie, Tex.
Air Medal & 1 OLC.



1st LT. EDMUND T. LEMMON
D. S. C.; D. F. C.
Air Medal & 1 OLC.



2nd LT. EDWARD LETZKUS
Air Medal
Missing in Action



CAPT. HERMAN C. LEUTHER
Ozone Park, Long Island, N.Y.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's



2nd LT. GLENN M. LYANS
Madison, Wis.
Air Medal



1st LT. WALTER L. MANNING
Booneville, Iowa
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



CAPT. JOHN W. MARTIN
Minerva, O.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's



CAPT. SAVERIO P. MARTINO
Framingham, Mass.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



CAPT. GEORGE ST. MAUR MAXWELL
Washington, D.C.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 5 OLC's



1st LT. FRAZIER A. McCOY
Jasper, Tenn.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



CAPT. JOHN R. McNEAL
Harrisburg, Pa.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's



1st LT. OTTO W. MEYER
Howard Beach, L. I., N. Y.
Air Medal

1st LT. ROBERT T. MINETT
Bloomington, Ind.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 3 OLC's

1st LT. ROBERT P. MOODY, Jr.
Stoneham, Mass.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's

1st LT. RAYMOND W. MOORE
Houston, Tex.
Air Medal & 1 OLC.



2nd LT. DON N. MULKEY
St. Louis, Mo.
Missing in Action

1st LT. JERALD R. NEVIN
Chicago, Ill.
Air Medal

CAPT. JOHN C. NEWTON
Shelby, N. C.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's

F/O. ROBERT M. NORRIS
Wichita, Kans.
Air Medal



F/O. WILBERT E. NORTON
Older, Tex.
Air Medal

2nd LT. EDWARD E. PARSONS
Jacksonville, Fla.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's

2nd LT. ROBERT L. PATIN
Milwaukee, Wis.
Air Medal
Killed in Action

CAPT. JAMES C. PEEK
Montgomery, Ala.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



2nd LT. WILLIAM E. PETERS
Marion, Wis.
Air Medal
Killed in Action

1st LT. HARRY M. PETSINGER
Butler, Pa.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's

1st LT. WILLIAM J. PROPST, JR.
Columbus, Miss.

CAPT. JAMES H. REUTERSHAN
Long Island, N. Y.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 7 OLC's



2nd LT. DONALD A. RICHER
Manchester, N. H.
Air Medal
Missing in Action

1st LT. ROBERT L. RICHMOND
Owosso, Mich.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's

1st LT. THOMAS E. RILEY
Baltimore, Md.
Air Medal & 1 OLC.

2nd LT. ELROY C. ROEHRDANZ
Minneapolis, Minn.
Air Medal
Purple Heart



2nd LT. SAM ROSPO, JR.
Akron, Ohio
Air Medal
Killed in Action

2nd LT. LOUIS T. ROULEAU
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Air Medal
Killed in Action

1st LT. ROMIE R. ROYSE
Klamath Falls, ORE.
Air Medal & OLC.

2nd LT. ROBERT M. RYAN, JR.
Gallup, N. M.
D. F. C.
Air Medal



2nd LT. FRANK J. SERES
Air Medal
Missing in Action

1st LT. RICHARD SHANGRAW
E. Orange, N. J.
Air Medal

1st LT. WAYNE E. SHERER
Buffalo, N. Y.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & OLC.

CAPT. JAMES C. SIGLER
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's



2nd LT. ERWIN R. SILSBEE
Air Medal

2nd LT. MICHAEL J. SLATER
Cohoes, N.Y.
Killed in Action

CAPT. ROBERT J. SKOTNICKY
Air Medal & 2 OLC's

1st LT. ROBERT B. STEINER
Air Medal & 3 OLC's



1st LT. RAMON A. SUTTON
Ebenezer, N.Y.
D.F.C.; Air Medal & OLC.



1st LT. WARREN H. TALLENT
Chicago, Ill.
D. F. C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's



1st LT. WILLIAM R. TAYLOR
D.F.C. & OLC.
Air Medal & 5 OLC's



1st LT. JACK S. TESSIER
Franklin, N. C.
Air Medal & 2 OLC's



CAPT. RISDEN B. WALL
Ridgeland, S. C.
D. F. C.
Air Medal & 4 OLC's



F/O. VINCENT WALL
West Haven, Conn.
Air Medal
Killed in Action



1st LT. EDWIN M. WALSH, JR.
Nashville, Tenn.
Silver Star; D.F.C.; Air
Medal & 4 OLC's; Purple Heart



1st LT. WILLIAM H. WEST, JR.
New Orleans, La.
Air Medal & OLC.



2nd LT. MAURICE W. WILSON
Atlanta, Kan.
Air Medal
Missing in Action



2nd LT. MARION M. ZIPPERER
Savannah, Ga.
Air Medal
Killed in Action



LT. COL. WAYNE E. RHYNARD
Fighter Group
Neubiberg, Bavaria

## COMANCHE PILOTS NOT INDIVIDUALLY PICTURED

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2nd Lt. Merle W. BAIR, Altoona, Pa. | C.T.C.D. | |
| 1st Lt. Robert H. BOORMAN | C.T.C.D. | |
| 2nd Lt. Arthur P. BOUCHER, Springfield, Mass. | C.T.C.D. | Air Medal & 3 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Sidney J. BOWLIN | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C. & 3 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Jack G. BOYD, Portsmouth, Va. | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C. & OLC; Air Medal & 4 OLC's |
| Capt. Edward T. BROOKS, Muncie, Ind. | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's |
| Capt. David H. BROWN | M. I. A. | |
| 1st Lt. Everett B. CHAMBERLAIN | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 5 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Donald E. CLAYCOMB, Denver, Colo. | P. O. W. | Air Medal |
| 2nd Lt. Stephen A. CLISHAM | | |
| Capt. William B. COLGAN, Waycross, Ga. | C.T.C.D. | Silver Star; D. F. C.; Air Medal & 5 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Horace W. CUMBERLAND | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 5 OLC's |
| Capt. Martinus DYS, Rochester, N. Y. | | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's |
| 2nd Lt. George E. ELY, Fremont, Neb. | | Air Medal |
| Capt. John FAIRCHILD, Rochester, Minn. | C.T.C.D. | Air Medal & 4 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Irvin L. GRANDJEAN, Dallas, Tex. | C.T.C.D. | Air Medal & 2 OLC's |
| 2nd Lt. Robert HILL | | |
| 2nd Lt. Mike J. IOVANELLA | | |
| 1st Lt. Edward Carl JOHNSON, Wichita, Kans. | C.T.C.D. | Air Medal & 2 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. John H. KAUFFMAN | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 5 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Michael KENNEDY | | |
| Capt. Roy A. LARSON, Jr., Kansas City, Kans. | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. John P. LEIBEN, Cleveland Hgts., Ohio | Trfd. | |
| 1st Lt. Royce C. McGARR, San Angelo, Tex. | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 2 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Edward M. McLAUGHLIN, Arlington, Va. | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's |
| Capt. Richard W. MENGER, San Antonio, Tex. | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Robert D. MESSENGER, Medford, Mass. | C.T.C.D. | Air Medal & 4 OLC's |
| Capt. Richard P. MORRISSEY | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 5 OLC's |
| 2nd Lt. Donald W. MUELLER | Trfd. | |
| 1st Lt. William E. NICHOLAS, Memphis, Tenn. | | Air Medal & 2 OLC's |
| F/O Calvin A. OWER | | |
| Capt. Leonard J. PENAR, Chicago, Ill. | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C. & OLC.; Air Medal & 2 OLC's; Purple Heart |
| 1st Lt. Richard PERKO, Milwaukee, Wis. | C.T.C.D. | Soldier's Medal; Air Medal & 3 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Robert M. PETERS, Mariamount, O. | C.T.C.D. | Air Medal & 4 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Frank B. PETRONE, Jr., Cranston, R. I. | C.T.C.D. | Air Medal & 2 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Melvin F. PORTER, Spokane, Wash. | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 2 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Richard G. POWELL, Mishawaka, Ind. | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 3 OLC's |
| F/O James W. ROGERS, Beaumont, Tex. | Trfd. to Z. I. | |
| 2nd Lt. Robert SPURGIN, III. | P. O. W. | |
| 1st Lt. Robert C. WHITE | C.T.C.D. | Air Medal & 2 OLC's |
| 1st Lt. Clarence WINKLER, Hollywood, Cal. | C.T.C.D. | D. F. C.; Air Medal & 4 OLC's |

# Ground Crews

## S-1 OFFICERS



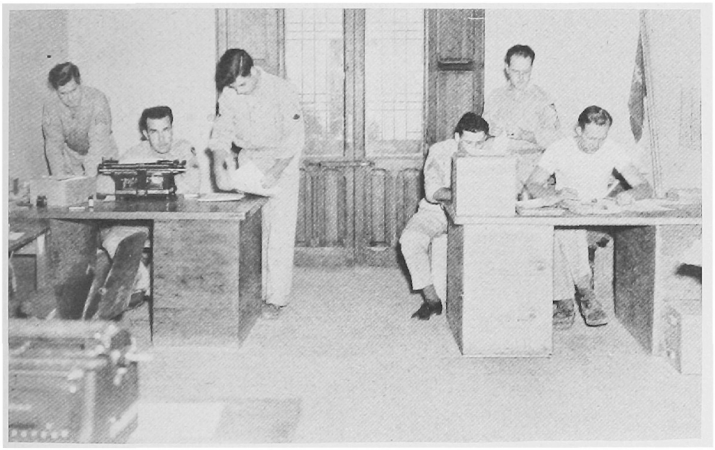
MAJ. RICE M. TERRILL
Washington, D. C.
Exec. Officer

MAJ. HOMER W. McKENZIE
Corpus Christi, Tex.
Exec. Officer

CAPT. CHARLES A. PETY
Mt. Pleasant, Mich.
Adjutant

CAPT. JOHN L. BROOKS
Las Vegas, Nev.
Adjutant

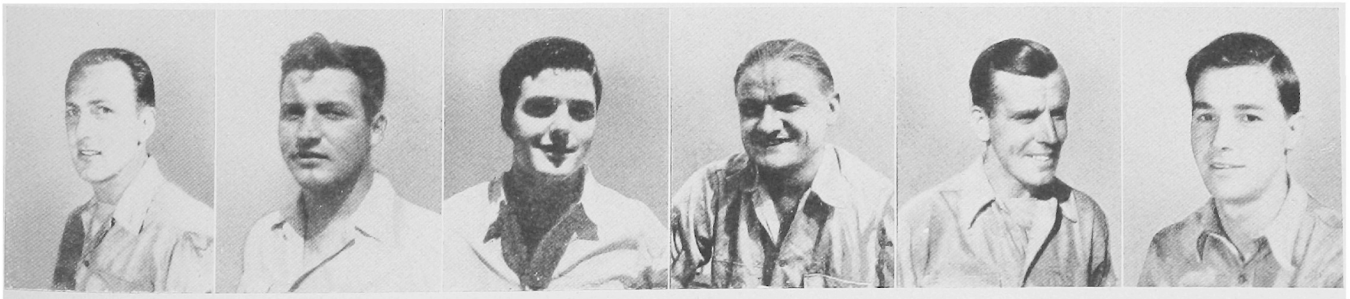
# Orderly Room



*Harrison, Vare, Reynolds, Lattier, McFetridge, Julseth. (Cesenatico, 1945)*

*Capt. Sargent, Maj. Fetters, Maj. McKenzie, Lt. Brooks. (Cesenatico, 1945)*





S/Sgt. Donald L. JULSETH
Stoughton, Wisc.
Classification Specialist

1st Sgt. John M. FOSTER
Brule, Nebr.
Bronze Star

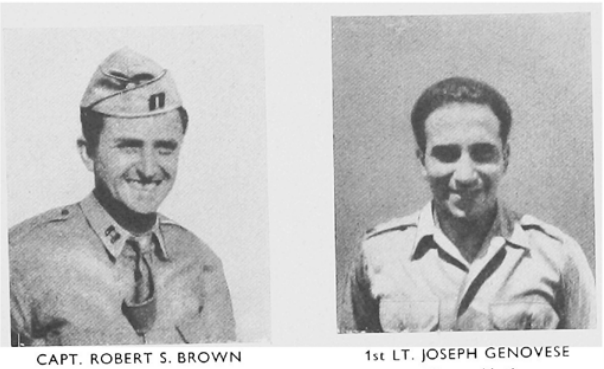
S/Sgt. George L. Reynolds
Dixon, Ill.
Sgt. Major
Bronze Star

S/Sgt. Walter E. ZYDEL
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Cpl. William H. SHEELEY
Chicago, Ill.
Clerk

Pfc. Virgil W. McCLANAHAN
Maxie, Va.
Clerk
Ops & S-2

# Operations and S-2



CAPT. ROBERT S. BROWN
Decatur, Ill.
S-2
Bronze Star

1st LT. JOSEPH GENOVESE
Albany, N. Y.
Ass't S-2



*Shipritt, Norgard, Boland, Juden, Devio, Potter, Dolgin (Cesenatico, 1946)*



S/SGT. PAUL F. DEVIO
Buffalo, N. Y.
S-2 Dept Head
Bronze Star

S/Sgt. HERMAN R. ALLEN
Loyall, Ky.
Ops Dept Head
Bronze Star

SGT. ELMER F. JUDEN
Erie, Pa.
Ops Clerk

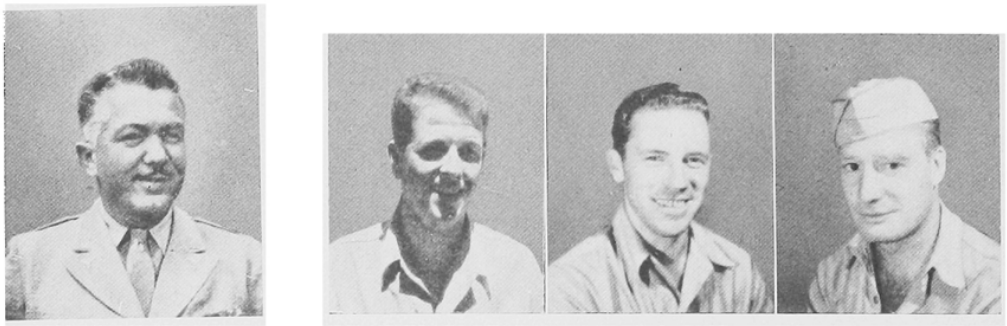
SGT. GORDON W. BARCK
Los Angeles, Cal.
S-2 Clerk

CPL. FRED J. LUCENTE
Hibbing, Minn.
S-2 Clerk

# Medics

*Weir, Skinner, Gibbons, Clements, Brenner*





CAPT. DENNIS H. ROBINSON
Bedford, Va.
Flight Surgeon

S SGT. RICHARD G. GIBBONS
Caldwell, N.J.
Dept Head

CPL. BERNARD V. ROBINSON
Oxford, Ala.
Soldier's Medal

PFC. LESTER O. MORRELL
South Norwalk, Conn.

# Kitchen



Sgt. Creed C. UNDERWOOD
Knoxville, Tenn.



*Kneeling: Underwood, Parks, Worley*
*Standing Krum, Walters, Lee, Habianec*



Sgt. Joseph G. GEERS
Richmond, Minn.

Sgt. Camillo A. VITTONE
Ottawa, Ill.

Cpl. Wesley W. BELYEA, Jr.
Waterville, Me.

Cpl. J. C. BUILOR
Valier, Ill

Sgt. John WILSON
Branford, Fla.

Cpl. Tony HABIANEC
Cleveland O



Cpl. Rudolph BISHOP
Cass City, Mich.

Cpl. Hugo J. LUPI
Kenosha, Wis.

Pfc. Glenn L. EME, Jr.
Ft Wayne, Ind.

Cpl. Milton W. SUTTON
Toledo, O

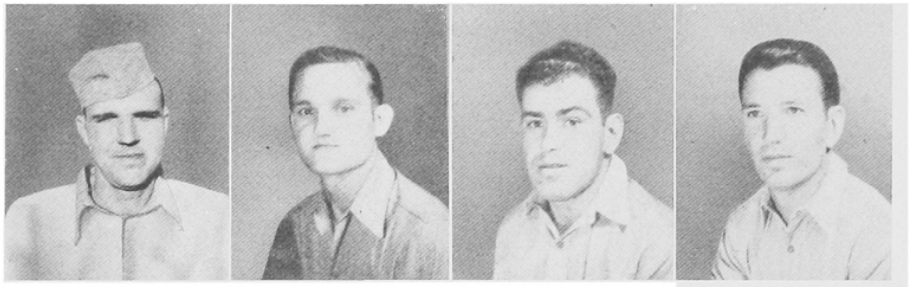
Pfc. William T. MARTIN
Elmore, Ala.

Cpl. Harold L. MORRIS
Niagara Falls, N. Y.

# Transportation




*Bottom Row: Kriemelmayer, Lt. Dies, Radtke*
*Middle Row: Spadlic, Lenini, Scott, Vickers*
*Top Row. F/O Norton, Kitelinger, Whisnate*

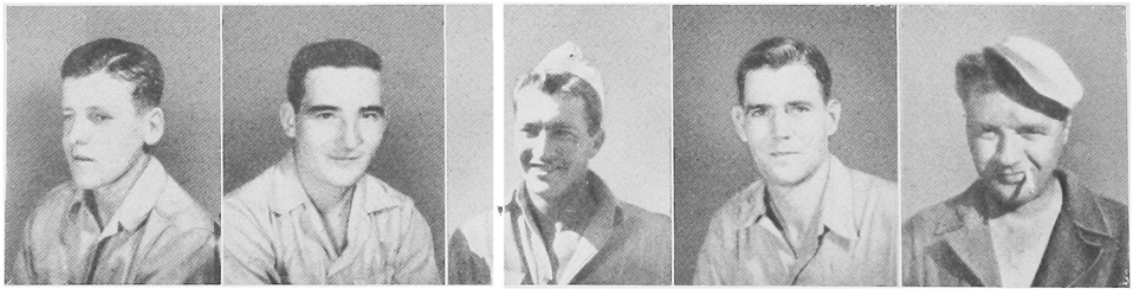


Sgt. Joseph O. KRIEMELMEYER
Washington, D. C.
Section Chief
Bronze Star

Sgt. William E. CROOM
Fayetteville, N. C.

Cpl. Henry P. ROBINSON
S. Attleboro, Mass.

Cpl. Alvie O. SCOBIE
Selma, Kan.



Cpl. William J. YOUNG
Philadelphia, Pa.

Pfc. Arch B. ELDREDGE
Santa Clara, Cal.

Pfc. Charlie M. HOWARD
Ft. Lauderdale, Flo.

Pfc. Allen D. SCOTT
Batesville, Ark.

Pvt. Stanley J. BROOKS
Staten Island, N. Y.

# Q.M. Supply



*Dellesandro, Ritchie, Rainay, Quintella, Gaines*



T Sgt. Henry G. ROTH
San Antonio, Tex.
Section Chief

Sgt. Merlin L. RITCHIE
Albemarle, N. C.
Q. M. Supply Clerk

Cpl. Wayne G. GAINES
Sardis, Miss.
Bronze Star

Cpl. John W. RETTEW
Mooresville, N. C.

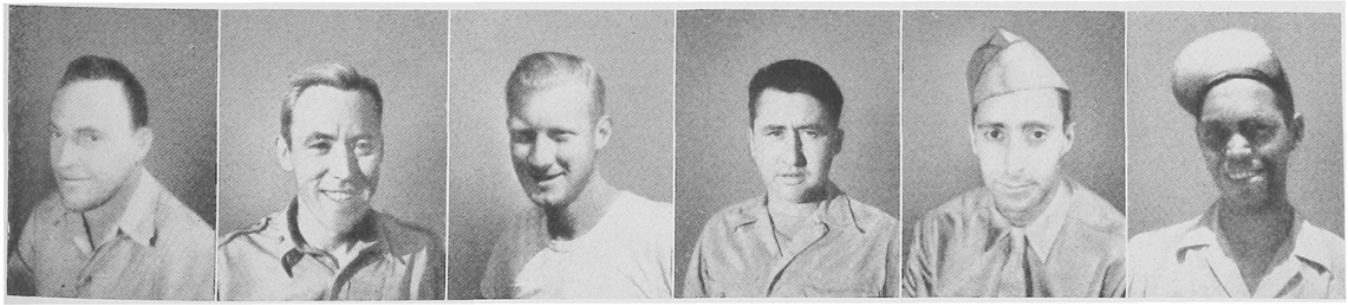
Cpl. Myron J. SWEENEY
Jeffers, Minn.

Pvt. Earl W. MOWERS
Schenectady, N.Y.

# Tech Supply



*Tobola, Wiley, Papciak, Volberg, Garrett, Cardinale*



S/Sgt. Russell A. FILLMORE
Lake Odessa, Mich.

1st Lt. John T. MAHONEY
Stoughton, Mass.
Pers. Equip't & Tech. Supply, Officer

T/Sgt. Raymond H. VOLBERG
Ridgewood, L. I., N.Y.
Section Chief
Bronze Star

Sgt. James Y. SELNSER, Jr.
Coleraine, Minn.

Cpl. Salvatore P. CARDINALE
Pittsburgh, Cal.

Pfc. Howard V. KITELINGER
Union City, Pa.

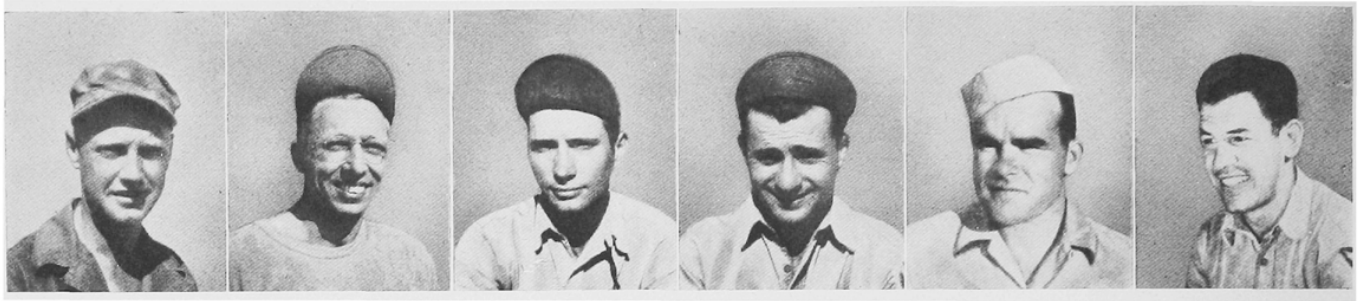
# Engineering



Capt. Bernard L. HOLSTEGGE
Little Rock, Ark.
Bronze Star



1st Row: Carrera, Rocco, Zingale, McGrath, Crow, Justice
2nd Row: D'Allesandro, Noonan, Colmer, Zane, Mailhot, Good
3rd Row: Michel, Starrett, Hessee



M/Sgt. Rueben W. BUSS
Houston, Tex.
Inspector

T/Sgt. Ralph A. COLMER
Mansfield, Ill.
Sheet meta lworker

T/Sgt. Lloyd T. GOOD
Mt. Vernon, Wash.
Line Chief
Legion of Merit

T/Sgt. Rocco SORANNO
Morristown, N.J.
Electrical specialist

S/Sgt. John A. BAUMANN
Pasadena, Cal.
Engineering Chief

S/Sgt. Troy W. CLAY
Branchland, W.Va.
Welder



S/Sgt. Edgar T. BOONE
Durham, N. C.
Parachute rigger
Bronze Star

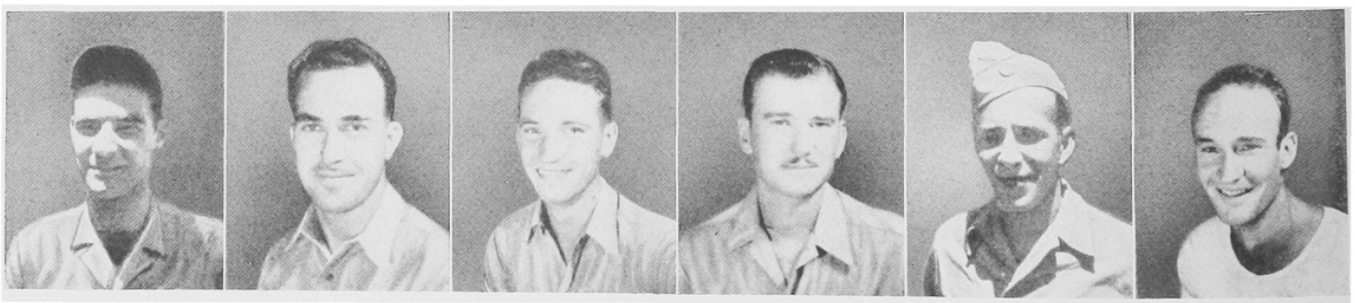
S/Sgt. Robert F. FANNING
Geneva, N. Y.
Engineering Clerk

S/Sgt. Earl W. HESSEE
Moorehead City N. C.
Mechanic

S/Sgt. John W. JUSTICE
Turlock, Cal.
Spec. vehicle operator
Soldiers Medal

S/Sgt. John E. LANTZ
Stillwell, Kan.
Instrument specialist

S/Sgt. Max A. SERNOFFSKY
East Amherst, N.Y.
Prop. specialist



S/Sgt. Fred. D. STARRETT, Jr.
Charleston, W.Va.
Prop. specalist

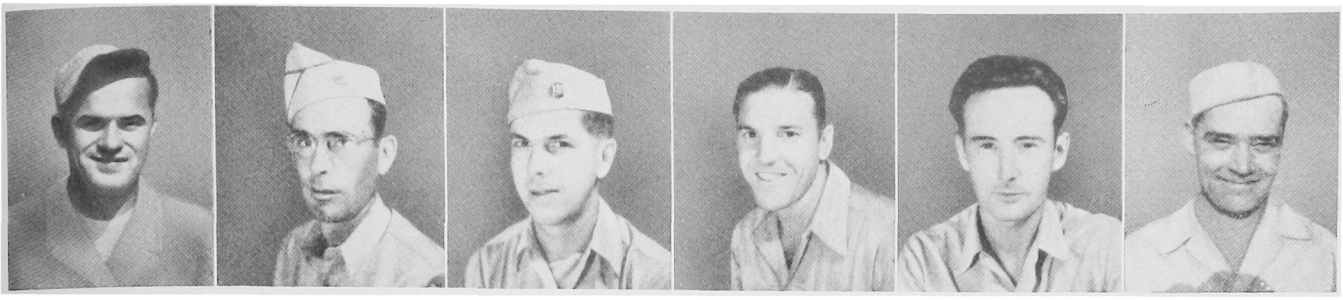
S/Sgt. Joseph J. VARE
Philadelphia, Pa.
Engineering Clerk

S/Sgt. George H. ZANE, Jr.
Santa Monica, Cal.
Mechanic

Sgt. Edward G. ANDREWS, Jr.
Durham, N.C.
Instrument specialist

Sgt. Romeo J. CHAMPAGNE
Webster, N. H.
Carpenter
Bronze Star

Sgt. John E. CROWE
N. Collinswood, N.J.
Painter



Sgt. Edward T. CVENGROS
Ironwood, Mich.
Prop. specialist

Sgt. Lester M. DAWSON
Rome, Ga.
Gas bowser operator

Sgt. Barrett KLINGMAN
Indianapolis, Ind.
Engineering Clerk

Sgt. Wilfred J. MAILHOT
Manchester, N. H.
Mechanic
Bronze Star

Sgt. Everly J. McGRATH
Los Angeles, Cal.
Painter

Sgt. Paul P. SCHNEIDER
Mt. Vernon, Ind.
Gas bowser operator



Cpl. Harvey L. LINGLE
Irvington, Ala.
Gas bowser operator

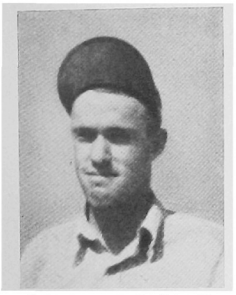
Cpl. Robert T. MARLAND
Auburn, N. Y.
Gas bowser Operator

Cpl. John MICHEI
Detroit, Mich.
Sheet metal worker

Cpl. Edward J. NOONAN, Jr.
Jersey City, N. J.
Mechanic

Cpl. Eddie B. SHORT
Monmouth, Ill.
Armorer

Cpl. Charles P. STREETER, Jr.
Westfield, Pa.
Gas bowser operator

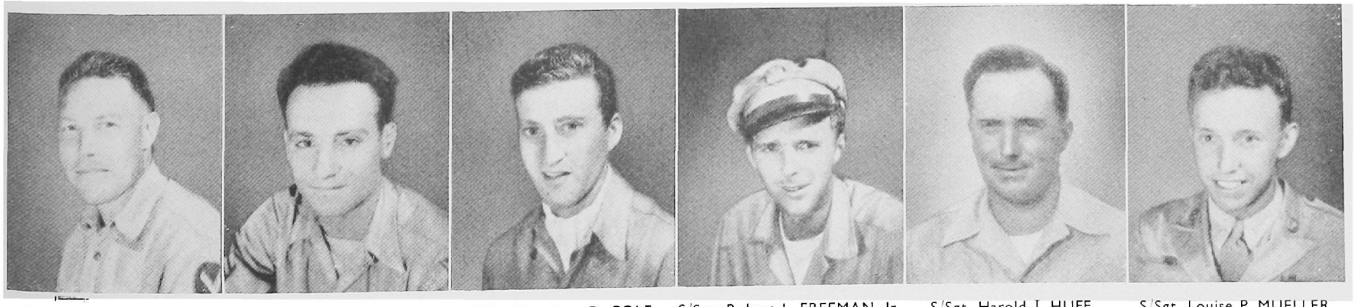


Cpl. William E. TACKETT
McKinney, Tex.
Parachute rigger

*1st Row: Selke, Ballen, Eichhorst, Cole, Freeman, Penso, Forbes*
*2nd Row: Smith, Huff, Grissom, Costa*



## A FLIGHT



T/Sgt. Edward L. KLAUSEN
Hobart, Ind.
Flight Chief

S/Sgt. Carman J. COSTA
Trenton, N.J.
Mechanic

S/Sgt. Harrison D. COLE
College Point, L. I., N. Y.
Mechanic

S/Sgt. Robert L. FREEMAN, Jr.
San Rafael, Cal.
Mechanic

S/Sgt. Harold I. HUFF
Flat River, Mo.
Mechanic
Bronze Star

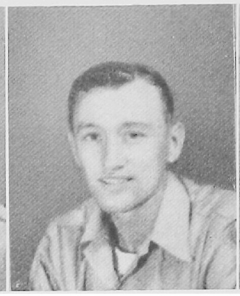
S/Sgt. Louise P. MUELLER
Chicago, Ill.
Mechanic



S/Sgt. Joseph B. PENSO
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Mechanic



S/Sgt. Merritt A. PULIS
Pago Park, L. I., N. Y.
Mechanic
Bronze Star



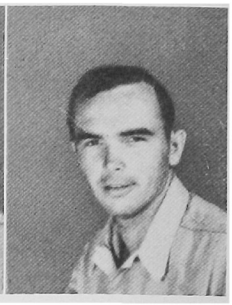
S/Sgt. Dwayne SELKE
Redwood Falls, Minn.
Mechanic



Sgt. Charles E. EICHHORST
Chicago, Ill.
Mechanic
Soldier's Medal



Sgt. Grady B. RICHARDSON
Grand Prairie, Tex.
Mechanic



Pfc. Jamie V. FORBES, Jr.
Gulfport, Miss.
Mechanic

## B FLIGHT



*1st Row* *Kunst, Mailhot, Jackson, Solley, Maratta, Palumbo*
*2nd Row* *Bullock, Juhl, Johnson, Carlson, Jerico, Davies*



S/Sgt. Melvin D. SOLLEY
Marlow, Okla.
Flight Chief
Bronze Star



S/Sgt. Gerald V. ERVIN
Detroit, Mich.
Crew Chief
Killed in Action



S/Sgt. Geo. G. DROLSHAGEN
North Bergen, N. J.
Mechanic
Legion of Merit



S/Sgt. Alex JUHL
Oakland, Cal.
Mechanic
Soldier's Medal



S Sgt. Bruno PALUMBO
Medfield, Mass.
Mechanic



S/Sgt. Robert C. MARATTA
Avondale, Canton, O.
Mechanic



S/Sgt. Rob't C. SUTHERLAND
Chesterfield, Mass.
Mechanic



Sgt. James E. DAVIES, Jr.
Baltimore, Maryland
Mechanic



Sgt. Robert P. JACKSON
Denver, Colo.
Mechanic



Cpl. Reid P. NELSON
Thornton, Id.
Gas bowser operator



Cpl. Joseph A. TEDESCHI
Iron Mountain, Mich.
Mechanic

## C FLIGHT



T/Sgt. Ralph M. BOISVERT
Holcumbe, Wis.
Flight Chief
Bronze Star

S/Sgt. Ray C. BEATY
Charlotte, N. C.
Mechanic
Bronze Star

S/Sgt. Harvey C. BENNETT
Montpelier, Ind.
Mechanic

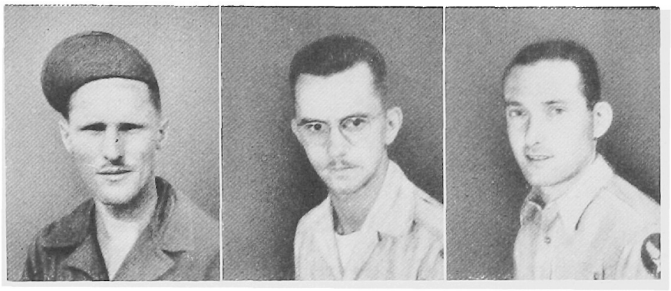
S/Sgt. Donald J. BROWN
Oak Park, Ill.
Mechanic

S/Sgt. Thomas C. FERGUSON
Dallas, Tex.
Mechanic

S/Sgt. Donald V. NEGETHON
Omaha, Neb.
Mechanic



*1st Row: Infantino, Watts, Brown, Negethon, Bennett, Hudson, Beaty*
*2nd Row: Ferguson, Tetter, Kuzinar*



S/Sgt. Jack R. RENFRO
San Antonio, Tex.
Mechanic

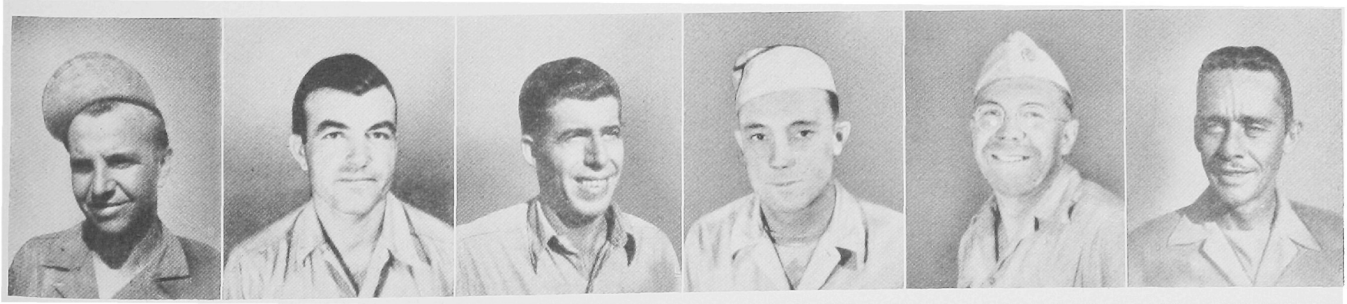
Sgt. Laurence L. DAIGLE
Hartford, Conn.
Mechanic

Sgt. Charles S. TEETER
Portland, Ore.
Mechanic



*1st Row: Berry, Kahn, DeSalvo, Benson, Whitworth*
*2nd Row: Welc, Hershberger, Nivens, Blanton*

## D FLIGHT



S/Sgt. Lawrence O. BENSON
Dallas, Tex.
Flight Chief
Bronze Star

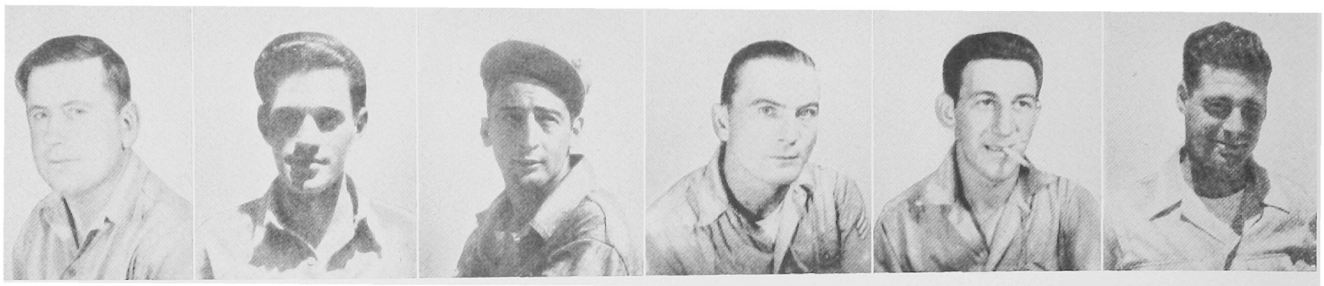
S/Sgt. Richard J. BAUMANN
Pasadena, Cal.
Mechanic

S/Sgt. Byron V. BERRY
Belmont, N. C.
Mechanic

S/Sgt. Robert C. BLANTON
Nickell, Ky.
Mechanic

S/Sgt. John H. BULLOCK
Cold Brook, N. Y.
Mechanic

S/Sgt. Jack E. CURRY
Durham, N. C.
Mechanic



S/Sgt. Bruce E. EDDY
Beaumont, Tex.
Mechanic

S/Sgt. Henry NIVINS
Akron, O.
Mechanic
Soldier's Medal

Sgt. Nicolino O. J. DeSALVO
Medford, Mass.
Mechanic

Sgt. Bernard S. WELC
Detroit, Mich.
Mechanic

Cpl. Carl J. DAVIDOFF
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Mechanic

Cpl. Charles H. KAHN
Chicago, Ill.
Special Service

## *Armament*



M/Sgt. Stephen Z. SHAW
Colorado Springs, Colo.
Section Chief
Bronze Star

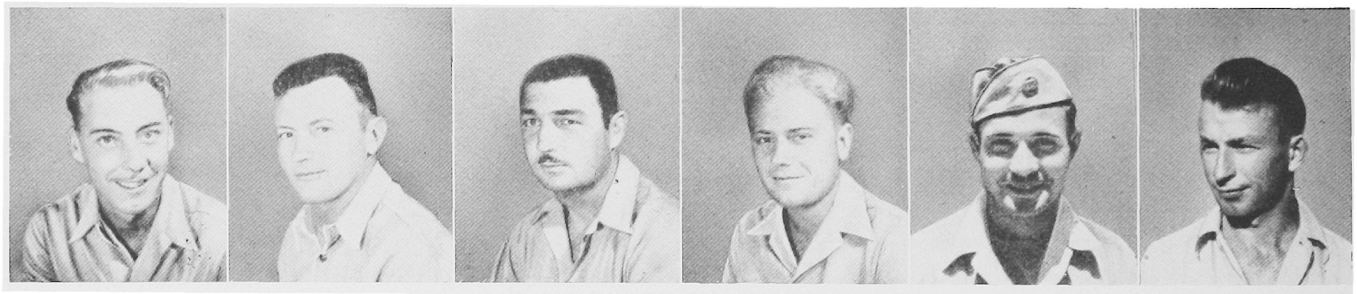
T/Sgt. Lawrence J. BEESON
Crawford, Colo.
Soldier's Medal

S/Sgt. Charles W. FORD
Centertown, Ky.

S/Sgt. Kenn. L. HENDERSON
Brooklyn, N. Y.
Photographer

S/Sgt. John H. HESKE
Hannover, N. D.
Soldier's Medal

S/Sgt. Albin KREZEL
Detroit, Mich.
Soldier's Medal



Sgt. Arville S. GRABILL
Imler, Pa.

Sgt. Dennis J. GLANTON
E. Rochester, N.Y.

S/Sgt. Carl C. WILSON
Monahans, Tex.

Sgt. Herman W. HOLT
Marshall, Tex.
Soldier's Medal

Sgt. William K. HARPER
Joseph, Ore.

Sgt. Hollis E. HALL, Jr.
Los Angeles, Cal.



Sgt. Floyd L. SABIN
Somerset, Pa.
Soldier's Medal

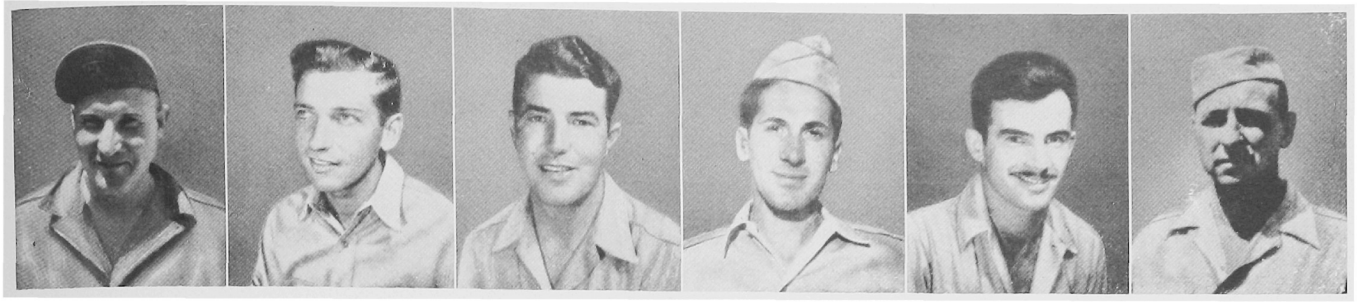
Sgt. Ervin O. KALLESTAD
Coeur d'Alene, Id.

Sgt. Herman J. PHILLIPS
Belfast, Me.

Sgt. Marcellus F. SCHMIDT
Hays, Kan.

Sgt. Charles M. SOCHOR
Chicago, Ill.

Sgt. William D. TOTHEROW
Gadsden, Ala.
Soldier's Medal



Cpl. Harold T. CADDELL
Bucklin, Kan.

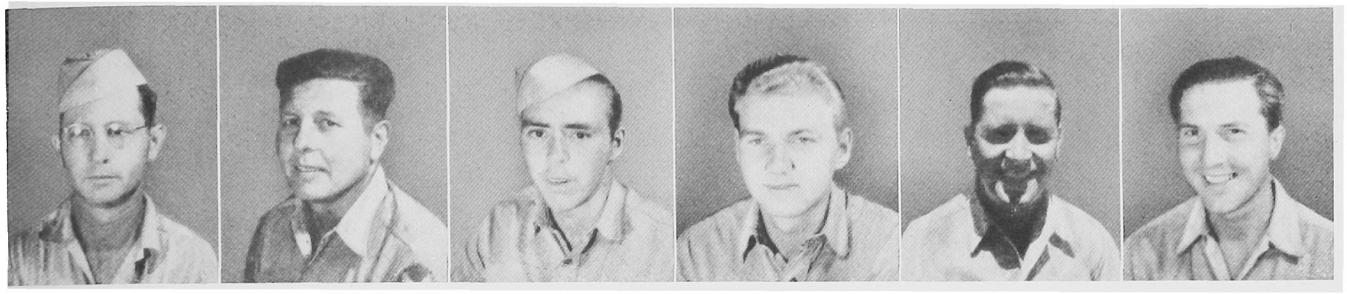
Cpl. Walter H. BROWN, Jr.
Fairhaven, Mass.
Soldier's Medal

Cpl. M. B. BUNCH
Celina, Tex.

Cpl. Anthony T. FORTUNATO
Hartford, Conn.

Cpl. John M. FRAZIER
Bayonne, N. J.

Sgt. Gus L. HURT
Almo, Ky.



Sgt. Albert R. MASCHEWSKI
Eldorado Springs, Mo.

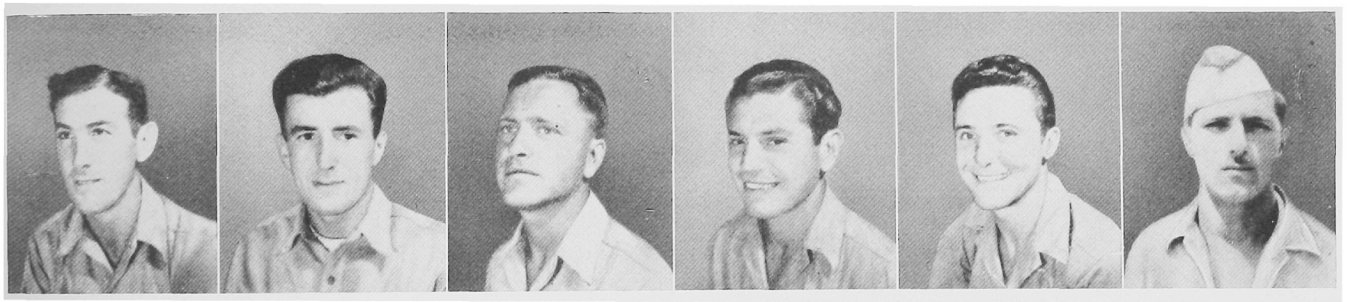
Cpl. Norman B. LANTOW
Marinette, Wis.

Cpl.
Doyle G. LAUTENSCHLAGER
Canal Fulton, O.

Cpl. Harry J. McCREARY, Jr.
Kansas City, Mo.

Cpl. Louis W. POIRIER
Brockton, Mass.

Cpl. Raymond P. ROOK
Butler, Pa.
Soldier's Medal



Cpl. Stephen POMAKIS
Salem, Mass.
Photographer

Cpl. Leonidas RISVAS
Dorchester, Mass.

Cpl. John G. WNENTA
Brookhaven, N.Y.

Salvatore P. CICERO
Kansas City, Mo.

Pfc. John E. KLOSKY
Glendale, L. I., N.Y.
Soldier's Medal

Pfc. John LAGANA
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Soldier's Medal



Pfc. Ralph C. LEE
Detroit, Mich.

Pvt. Richard L. MALONE
Bellingham, Wash.




*1st Row: Schwartz, Bean, Kapp, Spradlin, Frazier, Stoher, Lautenschlager, Hunt*
*2nd Row: Shaw, Lt. Hotviz, Wilson, Kinsella, Kermanack, Caddell, Dunn, Beeson, Hall, Hutson, Jacobs*

# 86th Ordnance



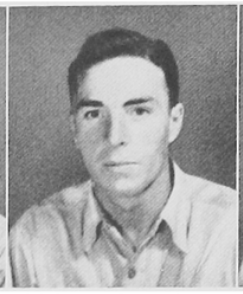
T/SGT. ALBIN JOZOKAS
Methuen, Mass.
Section Chief
Bronze Star



S/Sgt. George M. SHEEDY
Stoneham, Mass.
Soldier's Medal



Sgt. Webster W. BENEDICT
Melrose, Mass.



Sgt. William T. BURNELL
Columbus, O.



Sgt. Mike SELEPAK
Beaversdale, Pa.



Sgt. John SHEDLOCK
Dunlo, Pa.
Soldier's Medal



Cpl. Silas C. NUNLEY
Altamont, Tenn.



Cpl. George OSLEY
Jordanville, N.Y.



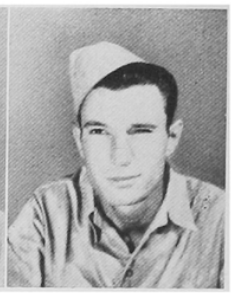
Cpl. Jack R. TODD
White Hall, Ill.



Pfc. George W. ANTON
Birmingham, Ala.



Pfc. Sidney SASLOWSKY
Brooklyn, N.Y.
Chem. Warfare



Pfc. Arthur J. NAEGER
Crystal City, Mo.
Soldier's Medal

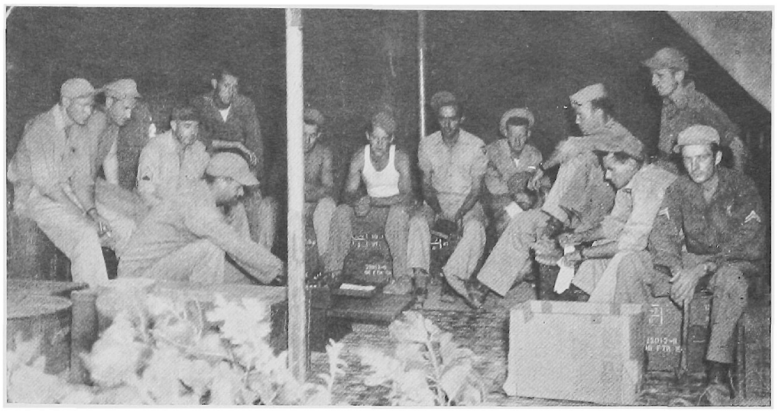


*Nunley, Cral, Jozokas, Beeson, Maschewski, Benedict*

# 86th Communication



1st Lt. Charles R. DEIS
Gilliam, Mo.
Communications



*Lipe, Moses, Senser, O'Leary, Palmquist, Kratz, Clark, Ostrem, Lowe, Keenan, Rose, Lesino, Bryan, Matteson*



M/Sgt. Eddie F. ROSE, Jr.
Maiden, N. C.
Section Chief
Bronze Star

Officer
T/Sgt. William V. DOYLE
Slidell, Tex.
Bronze Star

T/Sgt. Joseph L. KRATZ
New Philadelphia, O.

T/Sgt. Donald E. NEBERMAN
Beloit, Wis.
Bronze Star

S/Sgt. John K. BROWNLEY
Baltimore, Maryland

S/Sgt. David L. BRYAN
Wilson, N. C.



S/Sgt. Paul J. CUNNINGHAM
New Rochelle, N. Y.

S/Sgt. Ernest L. PARENT
Springfield, Mass.

S/Sgt. Daniel L. WEAVER
Cleveland, O.

Sgt. Maurice W. BROOKS
Carthage, Ind.

Sgt. Frank C. CIPRIANO
Jersey City, N. J.

Sgt. Joseph W. GOLDEN
Chicago, Ill.



Sgt. Preston GREEN, Jr.
Spottsville, Ky.

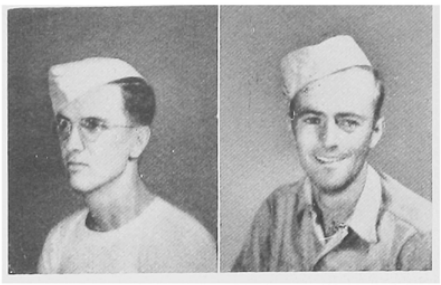
Edwin J. MARCOE
Fond du Lac, Wis.

Cpl. Homer E. DOBECK
New Martinsvile, W.Va.

Pfc. William C. LESINO
W. Orange, N. J.

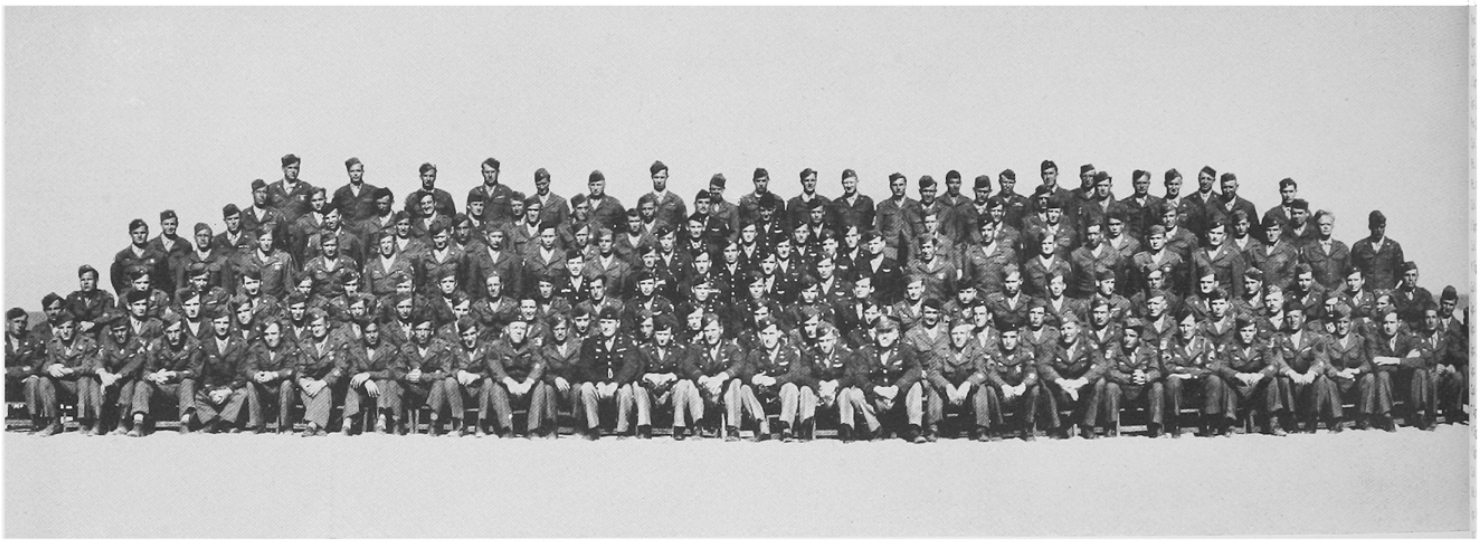
Cpl. Dale E. MATTESON
Akeley Minn.

Cpl. Lloyd A. SHANNON
Peoria, Ill.



Cpl. Richard W. SHARER
Roaring Springs, Pa.

Pfc. George W. McCORD
Lowell, Mass



# GROUND PERSONNEL NOT INDIVIDUALLY PICTURED:

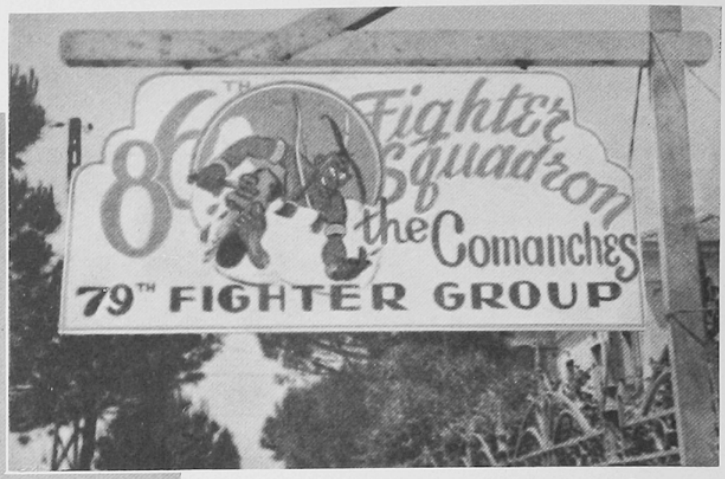
## OFFICERS

| | |
|---|---|
| Capt. Charles F. JACKSON | Intelligence |
| 2nd Lt. Frank M. KAUFMAN | Ordnance |
| Capt. KENDRICKS | |
| Capt. Edward B. POLACK | Assistant Intelligence |
| Capt. Philip L. WRIGHT | Transp., Tech. Sly., S-2 |

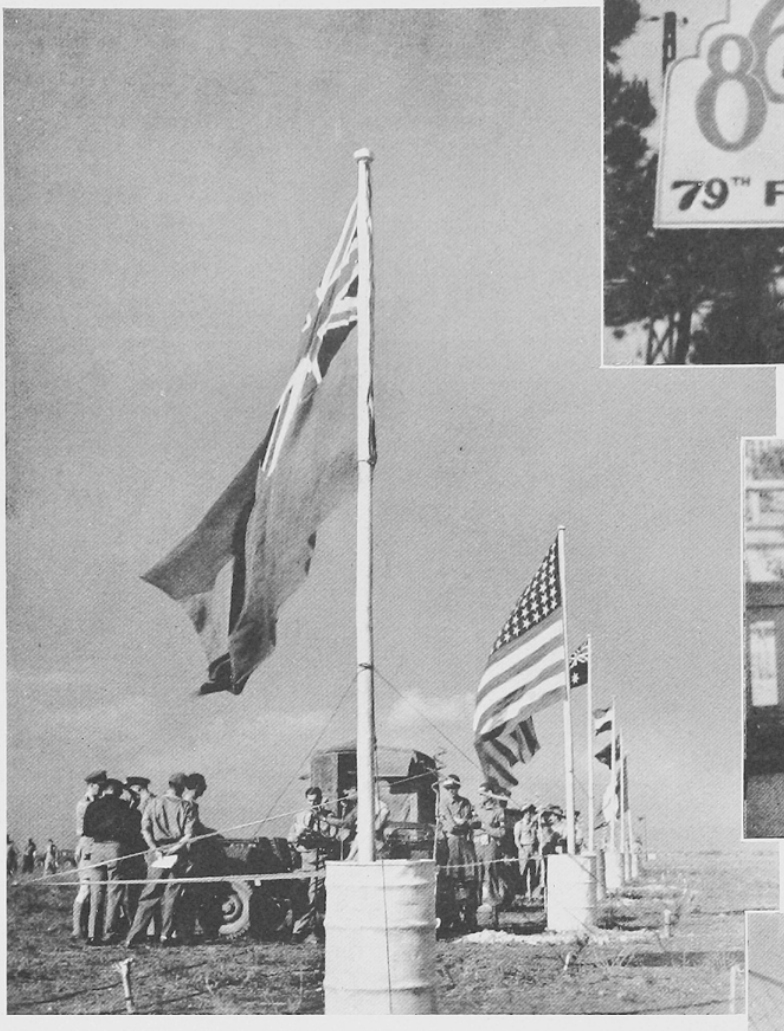
## ENLISTED MEN

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Cpl. George T. ALGER | New York, N.Y. | Tech. Supply |
| Cpl. Harrison S. ALLYN | Caribou, Me. | Ordnance |
| Pvt. Kenneth F. ARGABRITE | Spencer, W. Va. | Cook |
| Sgt. Richard M. BALL | Royal Oak, Mich. | Engineering |
| M/Sgt. Harry D. BEATTY | Oil City, Pa. | Armorer |
| Sgt. Jesse A. BICKFORD | | Cook |
| S/Sgt. Hugh A. BINNING | Coshocton, O. | Engineering |
| S/Sgt. Donald C. BLAIR | Pulaski, Ia. | Crew Chief |
| Sgt. Peter R. BOHEIM | Tomahawk, Wis. | Cook |
| Sgt. Charles M. BOWERS | Elkton, Maryland | Cook |
| S/Sgt. Walter J. BOWER, Jr. | N. Sacramento, Cal. | Mechanic |
| Pvt. Jerry BOZIN | | |
| Sgt. Philip BRENNER | Brooklyn, N. Y. | Orderly Room |
| Cpl. Maurice BRENNER | Brooklyn, N.Y. | Medics |
| S/Sgt. John F. BROWN | Belmont, N. C. | Cook |
| Sgt. John C. CARROLL | | Transportation |
| Pvt. John CASSATTA | | |
| Cpl. Curtis CHAPMAN | Summerville, Ga. | Medics |
| Pfc. Mathew A. CIBER | Wilmington, Del. | Operations |
| Pfc. Dennis A. CLARK | Wisconsin Rapids, Wis. | Communications |
| Cpl. John P. CLEMENTS | Columbus, Ga. | Medics |
| S/Sgt. Joseph J. CLORAN | Dorchester, Mass. | Tech. Supply |
| Cpl. Kermit L. COLE | Ogdensburg, N.Y. | Armorer |
| M/Sgt. Roland L. CONNER | Bromley, Mo. | Engineering (" B"Flt.) |
| Cpl. Pasquale J. CONSOLI | | Engineering |
| Sgt. Henry E. CULLEN | Lynn, Mass. | S-2 |
| Sgt. Edward L. CURTIS | Winchester, N. H. | Ordnance |
| Sgt. John L. DEAVER | Bluff Dale, Tex. | Communications |
| Sgt. Edward V. DeANGELIS | Altoona, Pa. | Communications |
| Cpl. George V. DeWITT | | Armamament |
| T/Sgt. Clarence L. DOUGLAS | | Flights |
| M/Sgt. William R. FRAZIER | Oakland, Cal. | Engineering ("A" Flt.) |
| S/Sgt. Meredith A. GILES | | "C" Flight |
| Cpl. Darwin E. GLOVER | | Engineering |
| Sflt. Estle HALCOMB | | Communications |
| Sgt. Frank J. HARASIEMOWICZ | | Chemical Warfare |
| Sgt. William R. HENDRICKS | | Mess Sergeant |
| Cpl. Joseph J. HERNICK | Buffalo, N.Y. | Medics |
| Cpl. Wayne F. HEWITT | Ellinwood, Kan. | Armorer |
| Sgt. Ray L. HITT | Los Angeles, Cal. | "A" Flight |
| Pvt. Edwin C. HOFFAS | | |
| T/Sgt. Truman A. HORNSBY | | Squadron Supply |
| Sgt. William B. JENKINS | | "B" Flight |
| S/Sgt. Frank A. JONES | Griffin, Ga. | Engineering |
| Sgt. Joe F. KEIRSEY | Santa Ana, Cal. | Armorer |
| Cpl. Andrew L. KEMP | Chicago, Ill. | Cook |
| S/Sgt. Mathew J. KILLEWALD, Jr. | Mt. Clemens, Mich. | Flights |
| Cpl. David G. KINSCHERF | Woodhaven, N.Y. | Armorer |
| Sgt. Elmo M. KNIGHT | Burlington, Wash. | Communications |
| M/Sgt. Raymond W. LIBBERT | Tulsa, Okla. | Line Chief |
| T/Sgt. Sidney LOADENTHAL | Phila, Pa. | Flights |
| Sgt. Thelman LOFTHUS | Bagley, Minn. | Armorer |
| Sgt. Johnnie W. MARTIN | Little Rock, Ark | Communications |
| S/Sgt. Kirby G. MARTIN | Roosevelt, Okla | Transportation |
| M/Sgt. William H. McABEE | Chicopee Falls, Mass. | Line Chief |
| S/Sgt. Wayne R. McKAY | Fall River, Wisc. | Flights |
| T/Sgt. Herbert H. MILLING | Wanilla, Miss. | Armorer |
| S/Sgt. John W. MITCHELL | | |
| S/Sgt. Bartholomew A. NATOLI | Brooklyn, N.Y. | Armorer |
| Cpl. James R. NIX | | Medics |
| Pvt. William E. NOBES | Los Angeles, Cal. | Transportation |
| Cpl. Windsor R. NORDIN | | Armament |
| Sgt. Thomas A. O'BRIEN | Suffield, Mass. | Flights |
| Cpl. Kenneth J. O'NEAL | Lewiston, Id. | Armorer |
| S/Sgt. George E. ORTMAN | | Communications |
| Cpl. Milton V. PEDERSON | | Intelligence |
| Sgt. Wilton A. POOLE | Duncanville, Ala. | Flights |
| S/Sgt. Harry J. PRATT | Old Laguna, N. M. | Armorer |
| Sgt. James C. REESE, Jr. | | Operations Clerk |
| S/Sgt. Benjamin B. RICE | | "B" Flight |
| Sgt. Eugene J. RICHMOND | Pittsburgh, Pa. | Cook |
| S/Sgt. Joseph F. ROSE | Oakland, Cal. | Flights |
| Cpl. Frank P. ROSS | Stratford, Conn. | Ordnance |
| Cpl. Frank SABLUSKI | Nashua, N. H. | Ordnance |
| Cpl. Don SANBORN | | Armorer |
| S/Sgt. Joseph R. SANDERS | Perry, Okla. | Orderly Room |
| Cpl. Herman SAWYER | Sullivan, N. H. | Ordnance |
| S/Sgt. Henry B. SCHILLING | Wadesboro, La. | Flights |
| Cpl. Everitt SEAREY | Keene, N. H. | Ordnance |
| S/Sgt. Howard E. SELHOST | Rock Island, Ill. | Flights |
| Cpl. Albert M. SHAW | Buckfield, Me. | Ordnance |
| T/Sgt. Clyd W. SHAY | San Francisco, Cal. | Communications |
| T/Sgt. Bates S. SHIPING | Modena, Cal. | Flights |
| Cpl. William T. SHYMANSKI | Brooklyn, N.Y. | Orderly Room |
| Sgt. George L. SMITH, Jr. | Pocatello, Id. | Flights |
| Kenneth W. SPENCER | | |
| Capt. William A. STEM | Washington, D. C. | Medical |
| Cpl. Harold W. STEVENS | Chicago, Ill. | Transportation |
| S/Sgt. Elden W. STOKE | Indianapolis, Ind. | Transportation |
| Pfc. Edward J. SULLIVAN | | |
| Cpl. J. THOMPSON | | |
| Pvt. James B. THOMPSON | Charleston, W. Va. | Cook |
| Sgt. Thomas V. TOADDY | Cleveland, O. | Flights |
| Cpl. William P. TODT | W. Loust Hills, N.Y. | Ordnance |
| Cpl. Charles M. TRETTEL | | Radio |
| S/Sgt. Joseph E. WALDRON, | Oklahoma City, Okla. | Ordnance |
| S/Sgt. Robert K. WALLACH | | "C" Flight |
| M/Sgt. Joe R. WALYEL | Cameron, Tex. | Engineering |
| S/Sgt. Burton A. WARNER | West Hartford, Conn. | Ordnance |
| T/Sgt. Miller WEEMS | Pioneer, La. | Armorer |
| M/Sgt. Theadore R. WIFONG | Keipu, W. Va. | Line Chief |
| Pvt. Dale O. WILCOX | Muncie, Ind. | Cook |

# Comanche Clicks




Cesenatico





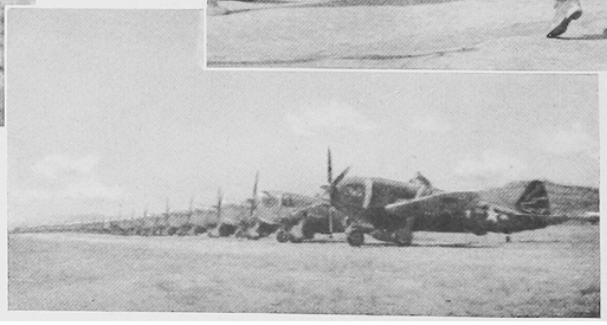
Hmm! (Cesenatico)



P. T. (Fano)

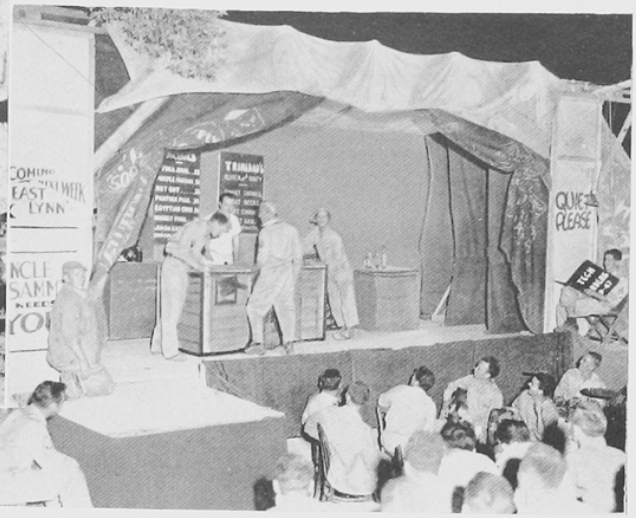


Washday (Corsica)



Striking-Power (Fano)

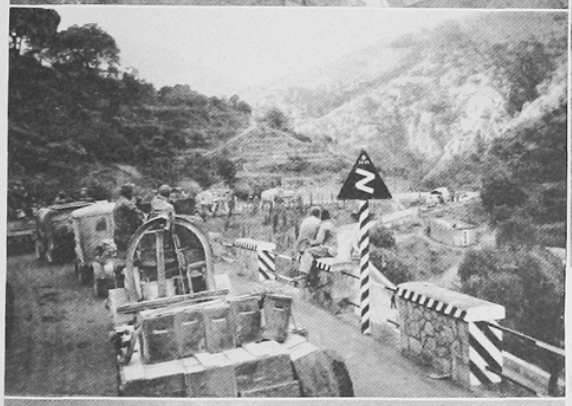


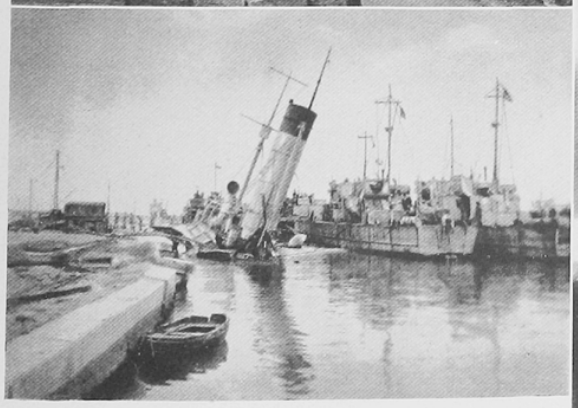




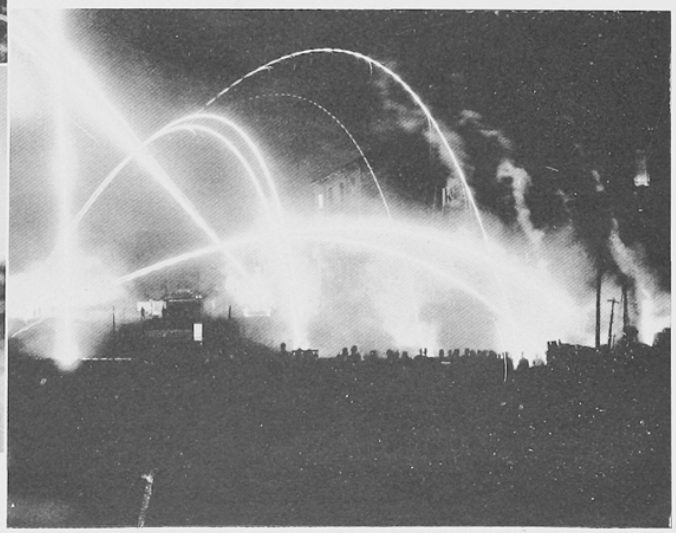


French pilots checking-out on T. Bolt





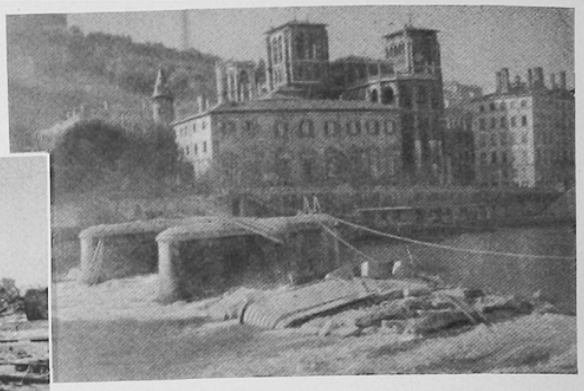
Above to below: "Hot-Seat" (Cesenatico), Rumor-Factory (Fano), Corsica, Fano



Fire in Naples Harbor, 4. July '45

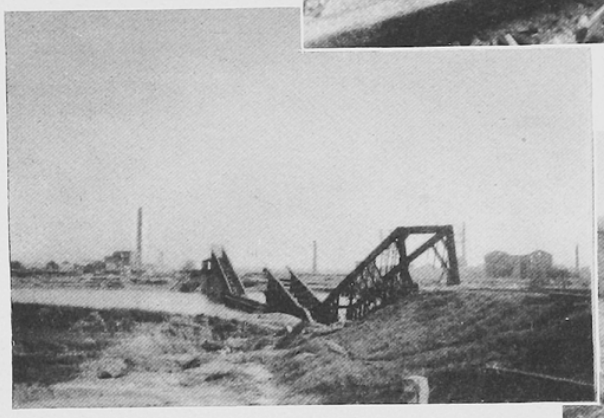


To France





# France





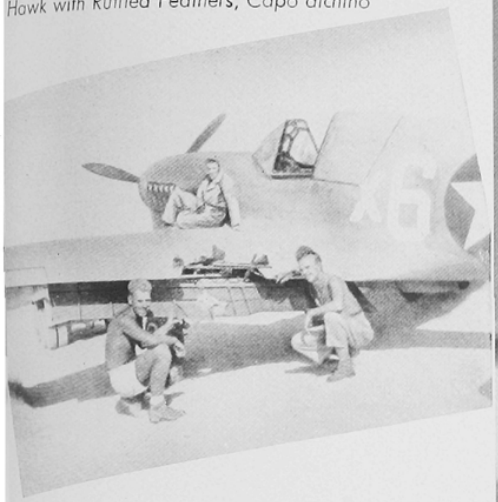


Cannes

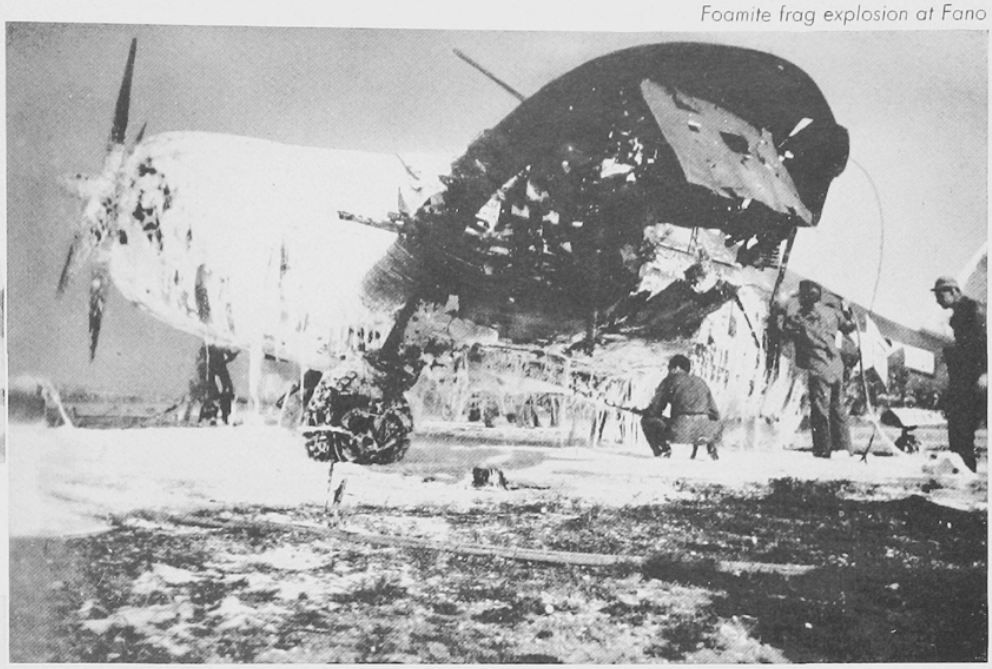


From France

Hawk with Ruffled Feathers, Capo dichino



Foamite frag explosion at Fano

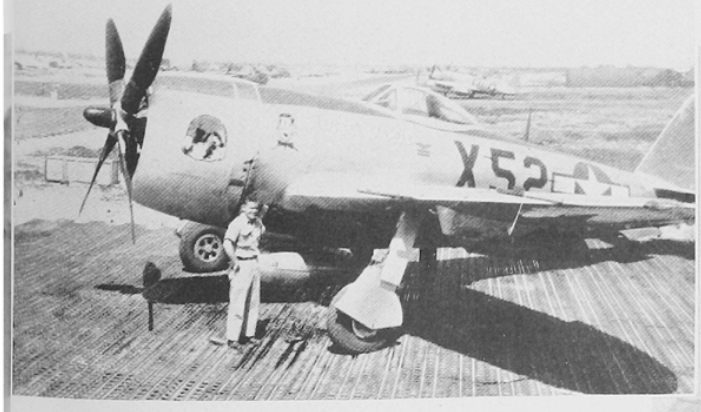




Auger Job on take-off at Cesenatico



Flak at Jesi



Cesenatico



(Parent — Cevengrose — Nelson, at Fano)


SKEETERS
87TH FIGHTER SQUADRON 79TH FIGHTER GROUP

# 87TH SQUADRON COMMANDERS



LT. COL. CHARLES E. GROGAN
Indianapolis, Ind.
85 Missions-C.T.C.D. Oct. '43
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 6 OLC's



COL. GEORGE T. LEE
Norwood, Mass.
191 Missions Trfd. Apr. '44
D. F. C.; British D. F. C.; Air Medal; 11 OLC's



MAJOR JOHN L. BECK
Post Falls, Id.
170 Missions-C.T.C.D. Apr. '45
British D. F. C.; D. F. C.; 2 OLC's;
Air Medal; 6 OLC's



MAJOR BENJAMIN B. CASSIDAY, Jr.
Honolulu
117 Missions
Silver Star; D. F. C.; Air Medal; 5 OLC's;
Soldier's Medal; 1 OLC; Brit. D.F.C.

MAJOR BENJAMIN F. UHRICH
Lincoln, Neb., 100 Missions-C.T.C.D. Nov. '43
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 8 OLC's

# IN MEMORIAM

## KILLED IN ACTION



CAPT. GORDON A. BELL
Tacoma, Wash.
153 Missions; Silver Star; D. F. C.
Air Medal; 2 OLC's; 12. Oct. 1944

2nd LT. HARRY E. BARTLEY
Sarver, Pa.
82 Missions; D. F. C.-OLC.
Air Medal; OLC.; 4 January 1945

1st LT. ROBERT M. BITTING
Quincy, Fla.
31 Missions
23. May 1944



CAPT. KEITH S. CROSKERY
Scarsdale, N. Y.
59 Missions
D. F. C.; Air Medal-OLC.; October 1944

2nd LT. RAYMOND A. ERMIS
Fort Worth, Tex.
82 Missions
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 2 OLC's; March 1944



CAPT. ARTHUR E. HALFPAPP
Steelton, Pa.
103 Missions
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's; April 1945

2nd LT. PAUL L. HARTMAN
Union City, Mich.
17 Missions
Air Medal; January 1944

1st LT. MORRISON D. LOFTISS
Indianapolis, Ind.
29 Missions
Air Medal; March 1945



1st LT. CHARLES P. LOGEL, Jr.
Strykersville, N. Y.
77 Missions
D. F. C.; Air Medal; OLC's; May 1944



1st LT. DAVID W. MOSS
Van Buren, Ark.
66 Missions
Air Medal; June 1944



1st LT. RALPH C. SPECHT
Moorhead, Minn.
73 Missions
Air Medal; 2 OLC's; December 1943



CAPT. GEORGE W. VACCARO
Roxbury, Mass.; 131 Missions
Silver Star; D. F. C.; Air Medal; 2 OLC's
July 1944



2nd LT. JOHN R. WINSLOW
Kansas City, Mo.
28 Missions
June 1944

1st LT.
HERBERT A. ANDERSON
Dixon, Mo.
74 Missions
D.F.C; Air Medal; 26 March 1944

2nd LT.
B. T. EDDS
Freeport, N. Y.
5 Missions
April 1944

2nd LT.
JAMES W. FANNING
Pulaski, Va.
2 Missions
12 May 1945

F/O.
CHESTER JANICKI
Zeigler, Ill.
22. April 1943

F/O.
RUSSELL K. JENNINGS
St. Charles, Ill.
8 Missions
D. F. C.; 28. August 1944

1st LT.
WILLIAM F. PRITCHARD
Wilmington, N. C.
3 Missions
June 1944

1st LT.
WILLIAM H. RUESCHHOFF
St. Louis, Mo.
3 Missions
March 1944

CAPT.
RICHARD S. WIENER
Highland Falls, N.Y.
54 Missions
Air Medal; 2 OLC's; January 1944

F/O.
HERBERT H. WOERPEL
Marshall, Wisc.
6 Missions
August 1944

# PILOTS



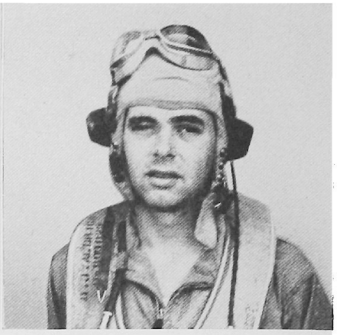
1st LT. GORDON R. AcMOODY
Coldwater, Mich.
100 Missions; C. T. C. D. July 1944
D. F. C.; 1 OLC.; Air Medal



1st LT. ASA A. ADAIR
Alderson, W. Va.
72 Missions; C. T. C. D. October 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 8 OLC's



1st LT. DAMON E. ADKINS
Oak Hill, W. Va.
57 Missions; Mia, June 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal



1st LT. DONALD J. ALDRICH
Chicago, Ill.
73 Missions; C.T.C.D., September 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal



2nd LT. BURKE F. ALLEN
Falconer, N. Y.
65 Missions; Mia December 1943
Air Medal; 4. OLC's



CAPT. PHILIP BAGIAN
Philadelphia, Pa. 120 Missions;
Silver Star; D. F. C.; Soldier's Medal;
A.M.; 4 OLC's, Purple Heart; Brit. D.F.C.



CAPT. DUANE S. BAKER
Carbondale, Pa.
91 Missions; C. T C. D., November 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 2 OLC's



1st LT. THOMAS M. BAKER
Hampton, Va.
94 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 2 OLC's



1st LT. JOHN L. BALEGA
Shamokin, Pa.
95 Missions; C. T. C. D., October 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 1 OLC.



CAPT. JOE M. BENITO
Tampa, Fla.
93 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's



1st LT. JAMES H. BLASSINGHAM, Jr.
Norfolk, Va.
49 Missions; C. T. C. D., July 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; OLC.



1st LT. DONALD R. BLUMENSHEIN
Mankato, Minn.
80 Missions; C.T.C.D., September 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; Purple Heart



CAPT. WILLIAM H. BOND
Albion, Ill.
83 Missions; C.T.C.D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's



1st LT. JOHN T. BOONE
Berea, O.
108 Missions; TRFD., September 1944
Silver Star; OLC.; Air Medal; OLC.



2nd LT. EDWARD M. BOZZI
Detroit, Mich.
93 Missions; C. T. C. D. April 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; OLC.



1st LT. ALBERT V. BRATT, Jr.
Wellesley, Farms, Mass.
40 Missions; POW RTD. U.S.
D. F. C.; Air Medal



CAPT. WILLIAM D. BRITTIAN
Knoxville, Tenn.
97 Missions; C. T. C. D., April 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 4 OLC's; P. H.

1st LT. RICHARD B. BROWN
Juneau, Alaska
90 Missions; C. T. C. D., August 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal

CAPT. GEORGE J. BUSHER
Hamtramck, Mich.
163 Missions; C.T.C.D., December 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; OLC.

CAPT. JOHN S. CARSON
Wakefield, Va.
89 Missions; C.T.C.D., February 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal, 3 OLC's

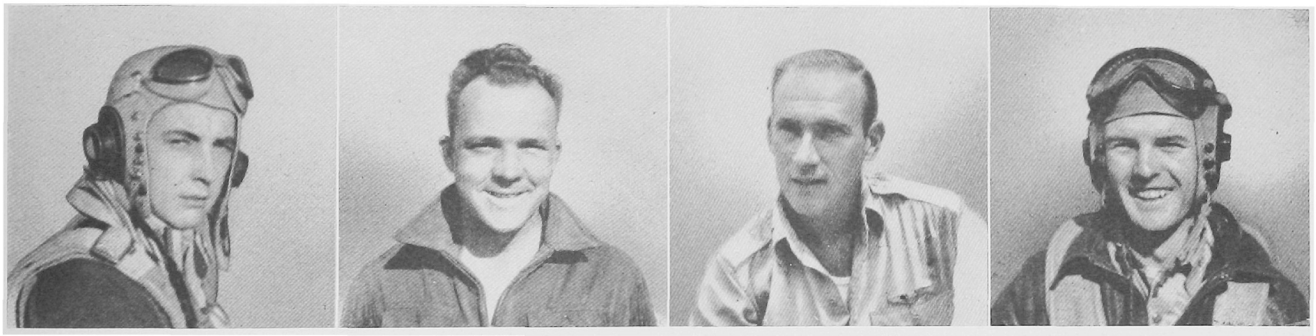


1st LT. BILLY G. CLEMENT
Era, Tex.
56 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
Air Medal; 2 OLC's

1st LT. JOHN C. COCHRAN, Jr.
Memphis, Tenn.
78 Missions; C. T. C. D., October 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal

CAPT. WILLIAM B. COLGAN
Waycross, Ga.
141 Missions; TRED. April 1944
Silver Star; D. F. C.; Air Medal

CAPT. RICHARD H. CROSS, Jr
Concord Depot, Va.; 84 Missions
C. T. C. D. May 1945; Silver Star
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's



1st LT. CHARLES T. CUMMINGS
Xenia, O.
72 Missions; C. T. C. D., April 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal

1st LT. THORNTON J. DANIEL
Jonesboro, Tenn.
53 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
Air Medal; 2 OLC's

1st LT. HARLEY T. DAVIDSON
West Hartford, Conn.
23 Missions; C.T.C.D., May 1945
Air Medal

1st LT. HERBERT W. DAVIS
Lewiston, Mont.
53 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
Air Medal; 2. OLC's



1st LT. ROBERT O. DAVIS
Canihill, Ark.
88 Missions; C. T. C. D., April 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; Purple Heart

1st LT. WILLIAM R. DEAN
Muskogee, Okla.
136 Missions; C.T.C.D., June 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal

1st LT. JOHN C. DIEFFENDERFER Jr.
Wilmington, Del.
42 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
Air Medal; OLC.

1st LT. EMERY A. DIETRICK
Patton, Pa.
80 Missions; C. T. C. D., October 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 5 OLC's



CAPT. JOHN P. DZAMBA
Cohoes, N. Y.
80 Missions; C. T. C. D., October 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 6 OLC's



1st LT. RONALD M. FAISON
Williamsburg, Va.
62 Missions; POW Rtd. U. S.
D. F. C. OLC.; Air Medal



CAPT. WALTER B. FAVORITE
Quincy, Mass.
82 Missions; C. T. C. D., November 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; OLC.



1st LT. EDWARD P. FITZGERALD
Waterbury, Conn.
84 Missions; C. T. C. D., October 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 8 OLC's



1st LT. RICHARD P. GORSUCH
Orlando, Fla.
58 Missions; Mia., April 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; OLC.



1st LT. JACK GRAHAM
Gainesville, Tex.
58 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
Air Medal; 2 OLC's



1st LT. CHARLES A. GREGORY
Danville, Ky.
87 Missions; C. T. C D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's



CAPT. JOSEPH W. HAAS
Martinsburg, W. Va.
85 Missions; C. T. C. D., February 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's



CAPT. HERBERT L. HANSON
Bridgewater, Mass.
83 Missions; C. T. C. D., April 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 2 OLC's



1st LT. TOM HAWK
Hollywood, Cal.
15 Missions; Trfd. July 1944
Air Medal; Purple Heart



1st LT. RAYMOND G. HAYMAKER
Covington, Va.
44 Missions; Trfd., January 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal



1st LT. FRANCIS W. HENNIN, Jr.
Newark, N. J.
71 Missions; C. T. C. D., October 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 5 OLC's; P. H.



1st LT. HERMAN F. HEUBEL, Jr.
Sharon, Pa.
41 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
Air Medal; OLC.



1st LT. THEODORE HOLEFKA
Warren, O.
41 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
Air Medal



1st LT. JAMES G. HUNDLEY
Monroe, La.
79 Missions; C. T. C. D., October 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 5 OLC's



CAPT. CHARLES JASLOW
Bronx, N. Y.
80 Missions; C. T. C. D., November 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 7 OLC's



1st LT. EDWIN L. JOH
Syracuse, N. Y.
92 Missions; C. T. C. D., April 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; Purple Heart

1st LT. EDWARD J. KELLY
Rutherford, N. J.
70 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's

1st LT RUSSELL R. KELLY
Cincinnati O.
67 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's

1st LT. JOHN L. KIRSCH
Lockport, N. Y.
80 Missions; C. T. C. D., October 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 7 OLC's



CAPT. JOHN C. KITTRELL
Rochester, N. Y.
100 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3. OLC's

1st LT. HARRY R. LLOYD
Sheffield Lake, O.
54 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
Air Medal; 2 OLC's

1st LT. LEO S. KORPANTY
Pittsburgh, Pa.
47 Missions; C.T.C.D.; May 1945
Air Medal; 2 OLK's

MAJOR JAMES R. LANE
Plainview, Tex.
43 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
Silver Star; Air Medal



1st LT. CHARLES L. LANDERS
Red Lodge, Mont.
51 Missions; P.O.W., June 1944
Air Medal

1st LT. JAMES O. LANDRUM
Littlefield, Tex.
86 Missions; C. T. C. D., July 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; OLC.

1st LT. JOSEPH L. LANG, Jr.
San Francisco, Cal.
51 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; OLC.

CAPT. ALBERT E. LINCICOME
Marietta, O. 171 Missions;
C. T. C. D., May 1945 D.F.C.; OLC.
Air Medal - 4 OLC's; Br. D.F.C.

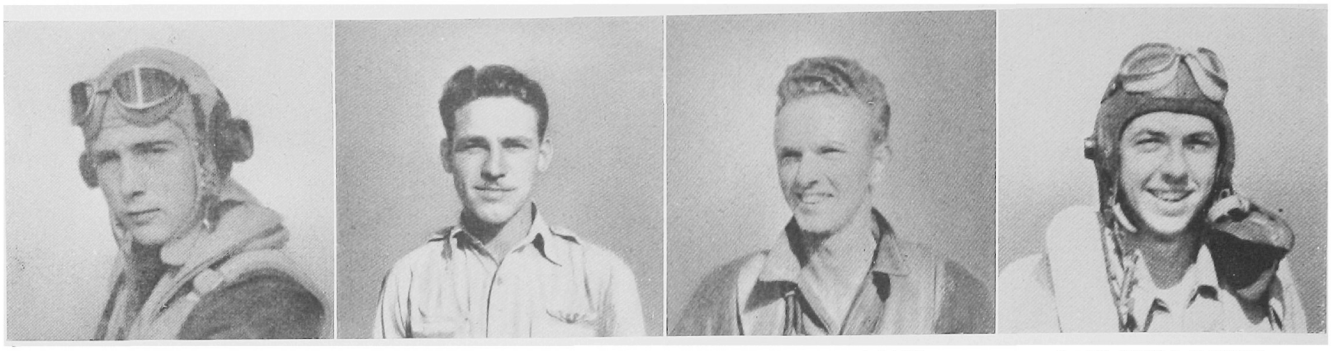


1st LT. LLOYD J. KLEIN
Chicago, Ill.
54 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
Air Medal; 2 OLC's

1st LT. JOHN D. LUECK
Minneapolis, Minn.
84 Missions; C. T. C. D. May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's

2nd LT. ROBERT F. MALSBERGER
Barrington, N. J.
36 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
Air Medal

1st LT. ALBERT C. MATHIAS
Chicago, Ill.
21 Missions; MIA, March 1945
D. F. C.



1st LT. JACK G. MAYE
Milwaukee, Wisc.
63 Missions; Pow Rtd U.S.
Air Medal; 2 OLC's

1st LT WESLEY W. MATHIAS
Columbus, O.
67 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's

1st LT. EARL C. McCAMIS
Plattsburg, Mo.
44 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
Air Medal; 1 OLC.

1st LT. JAMES E. McCARTY
Wheaton, Ill.
78 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's



1st LT. JAMES E. McGOVERN, Jr.
Tarentum, Pa.
69 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's

CAPT. FRANK H. MILSTEAD
Statesville, N. C.
102 Missions; C. T. C. D., April 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 4 OLC's

CAPT. WARREN J. MORGAN
Duluth, Minn.
90 Missions; C.T. C. D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's

1st LT. BRUCE L. MORRISON
Glastonbury, Conn.
110 Missions; C.T.C.D., November 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 6 OLC's



1st LT. FRANK L. NICOLAI, Jr.
Detroit, Mich.
101 Missions; C. T. C. D.. April 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's

1st LT. ROBERT E. NOELL
Greensboro, N. C.
65 Missions; ; C. T. C. D., June 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal

1st LT. ROBERT P. NORMAN
Norfolk, Va.
61 Missions; POW Rtd. to U. S.
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 1 OLC.

CAPT. CLINTON V. OWEN
Capron, Okla.
143 Missions; C. T. C. D., April 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 5 OLC's



CAPT. RAFFAELLE PASQUALE
Haverhill, Mass.
79 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's; Sold. M.

1st LT. CHARLES B. PATTERSON
Waco, Tex.
71 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's; P. H.

2nd LT. ROBERT A. PAUL
Brooklyn, N. Y.
16 Missions; Mia, April 1944
Air Medal

CAPT. WALTER G. PETERMAN
Stillwater, Okla.
154 Missions; C. T. C. D., July 1944
D. F. C.; OLC.; Air Medal



1st LT. JOHN H. PINKHAM
Ridgefield Pk., N. Y.
80 Missions; C. T. C. D., November 1943
Air Medal; 2 OLC's

CAPT. VICTOR L. PHELPS
Welsh, La.
116 Missions; POW Rtd. to U. S.
D. F. C.; Soldier's Medal; Air Medal

1st LT. ARTHUR H. PNEUMAN
Syracuse, N. Y.
46 Missions; POW Rtd. to U. S.
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 2 OLC's

1st LT. ELMER N. POLLAN, Jr.
Dothan, Ala.
70 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal,; 2 OLC's



1st LT. WILLIAM T. POWERS
Pittsburgh, Pa.
70 Missions; C. T. C. D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's

1st LT. RICHARD E. RICE
New York, N. Y.
81 Missions; C. T. C. D., February 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's

CAPT. WILLIAM B. ROGERS
Newacilin, Pa.
80 Missions; C.T.C.D., October 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 7 OLC's

2nd LT. CHARLES F. ROLPH, Jr.
Phoenix, Ariz.
48 Missions; C.T.C.D., May 1945
Air Medal; 2 OLC's



1st LT. ROBERT G. SAUREY
Columbia Falls, Mont.
22 Missions; C.T.C.D., May 1945
Air Medal

1st LT. STANLEY J. SHAFFER
Shaprsville, Pa.
72 Missions; C.T.C.D., April 1944
Air Medal

CAPT. DAVID H. SHUTTLEWORTH
Amsterdam, N. Y.
152 Missions; C.T.C.D., October 1944
D. F. C.; 1 OLC.; Air Medal; OLC.

1st LT. DONALD S. SIRMAN
Philadelphia, Pa.
95 Missions; C.T.C.D., June 1944
Purple Heart; Air Medal



1st LT. NOEL SONNICHSEN
Willimantic, Conn.
71 Missions; Mia, August 1944
Air Medal

1st LT. HERBERT L. SPEAS, Jr.
Thomasville, N. C.
66 Missions; C.T.C.D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's

1st LT. JAMES D. SPRALEY
New Weston, O.
64 Missions; C.T.C.D., May 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's

CAPT. CLARENCE E. STEVENS
Laurel, Miss.
21 Missions; POW Rtd. to U. S.



1st LT. ROBERT F. SWENSON
Hillsdale, N.Y.
23 Missions; Mia, March 1944

1st LT. FERDINAND TICHENOR
Culver City, Cal.
115 Missions; C.T.C.D., October 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal; OLC.

1st LT. VERNON C. THOMPSON
Trion Ga.,
66 Missions; C.T.C.D., April 1944
Air Medal

1st LT. WILTON A. THOMPSON
Woodward, Tex.
86 Missions; C.T.C.D., August 1944
Air Medal; Purple Heart



1st LT. GARTH E. THORNTON
Shaker Heights, O.
52 Missions; Mia, March 1944

1st LT. CHARLES E. TRUMBO, Jr.
Wewka, Okla.
100 Missions; C.T.C.D., June 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal

1st LT. DAVID H. VANDIVORT
Dallas, Tex.
81 Missions; C.T.C.D., February 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal

CAPT. FRITZ S. VILLINES
Rosedale, Okla.
91 Missions; C.T.C.D., May 1943
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's



1st LT. EUGENE D. VOIGT
Graettinger, Iowa
48 Missions; C.T.C.D., May 1945
Air Medal; 2 OLC's

1st LT. JACK M. WAINWRIGHT
Birmingham, Ala.
80 Missions; C.T.C.D., March 1944
D. F. C.; Air Medal

1st LT. WILLIAM C. WALLER
Erie, Pa.
74 Missions; C.T.C.D., May 1945
D. F. C.; Air Medal; 3 OLC's

1st LT. MORRIS H. WATKINS
Knoxville, Ark.
81 Missions; C.T.C.D., November 1943
Purple Heart; Air Medal; 8 OLC's



1st LT. DAVID E. WILLIAMS
Sausalite, Cal.
46 Missions; C.T.C.D., May 1945
Air Medal-OLC.

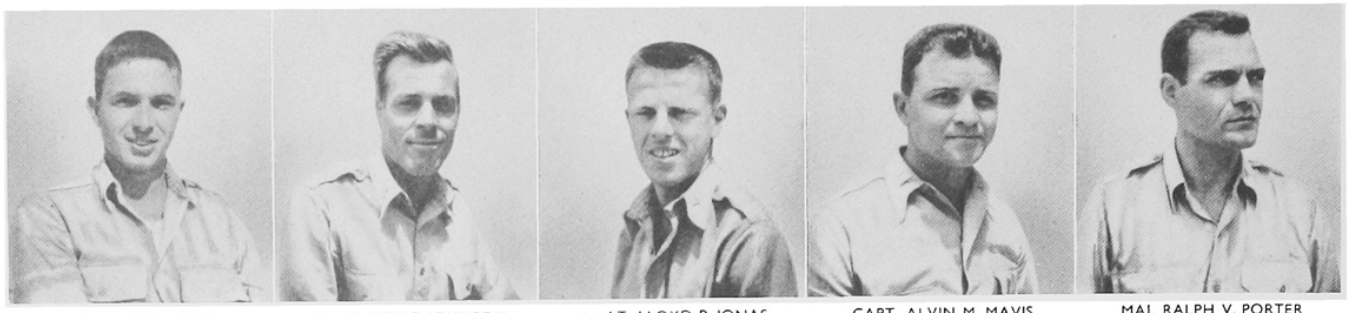
2nd LT. JAMES P. WILLIAMS
Holcomb Rock, Va.
2 Missions; Mia, August 1944
D. F. C.

1st LT. HAROLD W. WUEST
Van Nuys, Cal.
55 Missions; C.T.C.D., May 1945
Air Medal; OLC.

## PILOTS NOT INDIVIDUALLY PICTURED:

| NAME | HOME-TOWN | MISSIONS | | DECORATIONS |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1st LT. WYMAN D. ANDERSON | Beaver Dam, Wis. | 82 Missions | C. T. C. D. September 1943 | Silver Star; D. F. C.; Air Medal; 10 OLC's |
| CAPT. LEO G. BERINATI | Brooklyn, N.Y. | 81 Missions | C. T. C. D. September 1943 | D. F. C.; Air Medal; 9 OLC's |
| 2nd LT. WARREN R. BOSTICK | Manton, Mich. | 3 Missions | Missing in Action 2 April 1945 | D. F. C. |
| 1st LT. WILLIAM I. FEUSTEL | Lindenhurst, L. I., N.Y. | 88 Missions | C. T. C. D. June 1944 | Air Medal; 2 OLC's; Purple Heart |
| F/O. LEONARD V. FUENTES | San Antonio, Tex. | 2 Missions | Transferred June 1945 | |
| 2nd LT. MALCOLM D. GLOVER | Ventura, Calif. | 19 Missions | Transferred June 1945 | Air Medal |
| 1st LT. KENNETH A. GORMAN | Baltimore, Md. | 24 Missions | C. T. C. D. May 1945 | Air Medal |
| CAPT. LEE V. GOSSICK | Mt. Clemens, Mich. | 87 Missions | C. T. C. D. September 1943 | D. F. C.; Air Medal; 9 OLC's |
| 2nd LT. GREENLAW | | | Transferred | |
| 1st LT. CHARLES R. GROSH | Galion, O. | 23 Missions | C. T. C. D. May 1945 | Air Medal |
| 2nd LT. HARLAN E. HIGHFIELD | Wilmington, Del. | 4 Missions | POW-r't'd to U. S. | |
| 1st LT. EDMUND C. HOLSTON | | | C. T. C. D. | |
| CAPT. FRANK M. HUFF | Woodstown, N. J. | 57 Missions | POW-r't'd to U. S. | D. F. C.; Air Medal; 5 OLC's |
| CAPT. JESSE F. JORY | Knoxville, Tenn. | 84 Missions | C. T. C. D. September 1943 | D. F. C.; Air Medal; 7 OLC's |
| 1st LT. ROBERT E. LIGETT | Middletown, O. | 15 Missions | POW-r't'd. to U. S. | |
| 1st LT. PAUL G. McARTHUR | Reform, Ala. | 73 Missions | C. T. C. D. October 1943 | D. S. C;. D. F. C.; Air Medal; 10 OLC's |
| 2nd Lt. EDW. O. McDONNELL, Jr. | Brooklyn, N.Y. | 9 Missions | Missing in Action April 1943 | |
| 1st LT. KENSLEY M. MILLER | McKeesport, Pa. | 83 Missions | C. T. C. D. September 1943 | D. F. C.; Air Medal; 8 OLC's |
| 1st LT. JAME P. MOORE, Jr. | Indianapolis, Ind. | 12 Missions | Transferred May 1945 | D. F. C. |
| 1st LT. DONALD A. MONTGOMERY | Sac City, Ia. | 47 Missions | POW-r't'd to U. S. | Air Medal; 2 OLC's; Soldier's Medal |
| F/O. MARION S. MYERS | Franklin, O. | 24 Missions | Transferred | Air Medal |
| 2nd LT. JAMES G. PITTARD | Indianapolis, Ind. | 43 Missions | POW- August 1943 | Air Medal; 3 OLC's |
| 1st LT. WENDELL M. SIMMONS | Magnolia, Miss. | 44 Missions | Missing in Action December 43 | Air Medal |
| 1st LT. GEORGE J. TRITTIPO | Indianapolis, Ind. | 81 Missions | C. T. C. D. February 1944 | D. F. C.; Air Medal |
| 2nd LT. VERNON TYSON | Greenville, N. C. | 34 Missions | Transferred June 1943 | |
| 2nd LT. FRED A. WRIGHT, Jr. | Gulfport, Miss. | 33 Missions | Transferred May 1943 | |

# Skeeter Ground Officers



1st LT. JAMES P. BELL
Barnwell, S. C.
Engineering

1st LT. RAY P. JOHNSON
Westwood, N. J.
Ordnance

1st LT. LLOYD P. JONAS
West Medford, Mass.
Communications

CAPT. ALVIN M. MAVIS
Springfield, Ill.
Adiutant

MAJ. RALPH V. PORTER
Detroit, Mich.
Executive



1st LT. DOMINIC ROSSI
Chicago, Ill.
Ass't Intelligence

CAPT. A. J. CIRRITO
Bryn Mawr, Pa.
Engineering

CAPT. WILLIAM H. ROBERTSON
Finchville, Ky.
Intelligence

1st LT. JOHN P. SCANLON
Minneapolis, Minn.
Supply & Mess

## GROUND OFFICERS NOT INDIVIDUALLY PICTURED:

| NAME | HOME-TOWN | DUTY |
|---|---|---|
| CAPT. ROGER C. CODY | San Antonio, Tex. | Adjutant |
| 1st LT. HARRY EINSTANDIG | Indianapolis, Ind. | Personal Equipment |
| MAJ. HERBERT W. FOGEL | | Executive |
| CAPT. CHARLES A. JONES | | Transportation |
| 1st LT. JOE F. MARKS | Hanford, Cal. | Ordnance |
| CAPT. PAUL J. O'CONNOR | Worcester, Mass. | Medical Officer |
| 1st LT. MILTON F. SAGGUS | | Personnel |
| CAPT. ELLIOTT K. SHAPIRA | Brookline, Mass. | Intelligence |
| 1st LT. EDWARD C. TALLMADGE | | Ass't Intelligence |
| MAJ. EUSTACE H. BANE | | S-2 |
| MAJ. STEPHEN L. MAGNESS | | Squadron Flight Surgeon |
| 1st LT. GEORGE M. SAGGUS, Jr. | | Personnel & Ass't Supply |

# Armament

It all started in the sand at a landing ground outside of Alexandria, Egypt, and ended in very similar sand on an Adriatic beach near Cesenatico, Italy.

The main functions of the "Powder Burners" were to see that guns shoot, bombs drop, and rockets fire. We accomplished this, in the face of two great handicaps: sand and vino. Unfortunately, we've always seemed to have had the sand with us.

L. G. 174, our first desert home, gave us experience with field maintenance problems. Invariably, when guns were pulled to be cleaned, a violent sand storm would whip up, and often one could hear the more short-tempered armament men exclaim: "Oh Sugar", or "Fie". Eventually a canvas shelter was erected, which improved matters somewhat. This shelter fascinated Haddaway and Mc Intosh, who painted scenes of local interest on the canvas panels. Here Plato Harrell was first done in oils, in a position that gained him lasting fame.

L. G. 174 was not all boiling cosmoline from guns and adjusting bomb racks. Nearby "Alex" offered the zoological gardens, Farouk's palace, museums, skating rinks, and other attractions. Some of us, notably Kane and Morrissette, spent one strenuous day in Alex prowling around "art galleries," and returned with sizeable swellings on the head from falling picture frames. From then on it became S. O. P. to travel in numbers.

In convoy from Alex to Darraugh, "Horizontal" Hines' services were lost for a good while when he became involved with a British truck, and broke his arm.

We stayed at Darragh a very short time, fortunately, before leaving for the big "Eyetie" airbase at Castel Benito, a few miles from Tripoli; also strategically placed next to a huge wine distillery. Containers lacking, that famed Yankee ingenuity pressed "Jerry" gas cans into service as vino jugs, and the misguided soul who had not at least two cans filled with "vino rosso" was a wet blanket. Totten was no wet blanket, and while driving a B. S. T. neglected to detour around a tank trap.

At Causeway, March 14th, we hung the first of the many thousands of tons of bombs that were to be dropped where they would do "the Tedeschi" the most good. There was much difficulty adapting bomb shackles to combat use, and before the solution was found, most of us took a dim view of the manufacturers of the temperamental device.

At Causeway the Wog-G.I. commerce began. Sweet obtained two chickens by intricate trading, and was about to make soup when one redeemed herself by furiously laying eggs. She was spared, and named Clara. Clara remained productive for many months, but became barren at Cape Bon, and Sweet was forced to trade her to another Wog.

Fauconnerie was the next stop after the Mareth Line was cracked. En route, everyone became lost; and our armament truck broke down on the first leg of the journey. Shortly after the stragglers arrived, one of our P-40's bellied-in on the desert near Gabes. Harrell and Gathers were among a party dispatched to retrieve equipment from the "pranged" plane. They returned with three Jerries in tow. Jerries were a novelty then: Harrell and Gathers were not. The Germans received the best food in camp, and were generally treated like visiting firemen; Harrell and Gathers received a jam sandwich, and were asked what the hell kept them.

The end of the war in Africa found us furiously scrounging for "Jerry" vehicles; Volkswagons, Fiats, Lancias, Renaults were added to squadron equipment,

until 87 on the road resembled a combination of Gypsy caravan, Mexican Army and travelling circus. During these goings-on Foy acquired a huge "Eyetie" Diesel, complete with "Eyeties," who were soon discouraged. About this time McDonnell began to have domestic troubles. He adopted a chicken whose egg output was meagre, but who chose to deposit her products in his sack. Mac was almost driven to sleeping on the cross-bars of his tent before the hen was sent the way of all flesh.

Out of the desert finally, when "B" Party went to cape Bon for the operations against Pantelleria; it was good to see a tree again. Cape Bon was the scene of the most intensive operations we had yet experienced; the peak being reached on June 10th, when we destroyed fifteen German and Italian fighters on a single mission. That night, we worked with matches and candles to service the late-returning aircraft. A barrel of beer had been obtained in Tunis, and in spite of the long hours, none of us were too weary to take part in the victory celebration. Causie, Krohn and Black were not weary at all, and long after the other celebrants had hit the sack, they were seen to tip the barrel on end and steal away with helmets full of the precious suds.

Only mad dogs, Englishmen, and Ooley and Black in search of a drink, would have gone out in the sun at Causeway, the s e c o n d t i m e. Here, refitting for Sicily, we worked only in the cool of early morning and late evening; remainder of the day was spent soaking in the Mediterraneran or the sulphur springs.

Zarzis (one hasn't travelled until he's been to Zarzis twice) was visited more frequently this trip, and we soon found ourselves swept off our feet by the giddy social whirl of that "bustling" metropolis.

Cassibile was our first Sicilian base. Sicily was almost as dusty as the desert, so armament maintenance remained a problem. The unsuspected value of a can of "C" rations was quickly discovered, and a good deal of barter for figs, melons, grapes and other desirables took place. Here, Clyde Churchill, (the only man who could make sparks fly while digging in mud), "G. I." Perry and Hanlon spent days excavating an elephant-sized fox hole; a day after its completion we moved on, and the most elaborate fox hole in the Mediterranean Theatre had to be abandoned.

The Sicilian Campaign was in its last stages as we reached Palognia; intensive operations—bombing and strafing—kept us hopping. The hated "meat-hook" method of carrying bombs was introduced, and only the very young and agile were able to keep clear of the dangling bombs. Nearby Caltagirone was popular, and a group club was established which for some reason remained a secondary attraction.

In Italy we kept moving behind the rapidly advancing 8th Army. We acquired basic Italian in such places as Bari, Barletta, and Taranto. It was quickly found the most useful Italian phrase was "Quanta Costa" ("how much?"), and commerce was immensely expedited.




*Armament loadi*
*Fano, Mai '45*

*Bombing up —*
*Corsica, June '4*

*M/Sgt. Almond*
*& S/Sgt. Snook —*
*Corsica, Aug. '4*

At Pennypost L. G., the usual rush for the best tent sites was curtailed when three British soldiers stepped on Jerry antipersonnel mines. It was later found the whole area had been heavily mined, so very few nonchalant strolls were taken.

Foggia no. 3 was perhaps the best all-around field we had yet operated from. The airstrip, and dispersal and living areas were grass covered, greatly eliminating "ole debbil dust". Turkeys were plentiful, and the Armament section had its customary poultry troubles. Dozeman had three underweight gobblers tied to his tent, fattening for the kill. They took to making loud noises in the early hours of the morning, and public opinion forced Dozeman to slap them into the pot long before the fattening was complete.

Five day furloughs to Sorrento and Capri were begun from Foggia. While on one such pass, Ziggy Park was almost blown out of bed during a Naples air raid. Though untouched by shot or shell, he became a casualty by catching a severe cold that hospitalized him for some time. Roy Welch took over as armament chief during Ziggy's absence, and did a very fine job.

Winter operations from Termoli presented many new problems, most of them traceable to mud. Our living area and the runway were one vast bog, and old "Kidney Beater", our tired Dodge, became mired every fifty yards. Steel matting on the runway and dispersal bays caused a sharp increase in our chief occupational affliction: "Armorer's Knee".

Capodichino in January, began a new era. For the first time we were stationed close to a large city, and most of the rural virtues acquired during months in the brush underwent modification. The metropolitan delights of "Skunk Hollow" and "Silver City" were freely tasted, with Foy, Ison, J. Kelly, Bredice, and Francoeur acquiring honorary citizenship in these communities. Lt. Porter left us here to become part of the "Command Section", and was succeeded by Lt. Marks.

At Pomigliano, a record for bombs dropped in a single day was set by the group. All types of weird persons were pressed into service on the bomb crew; even "Causie" was seen to wrestle with a thousand pounder. At "Pomig" a most elaborate squadron bar was built, attracting "Lushwells" from far and near.

Corsica was much the same as "Pomig": a great deal of work for the bomb crew, and just enough fine dust to sour an armorer's personality. Here we had a group of tents called "Powder City". Plato Harrell, as usual, lived alone and liked it, though he was seen to emerge from his pup-tent in the cool of evening, with roulette wheel, intent upon separating the unwary from their francs.

In the south of France the French were extremely grateful for their liberation, expressing it in many tangible ways. Fruit, eggs, wine and vegetables, were pressed upon us as we passed through St. Raphael, Dradguinan, Valence and Lyon; after the scarcity of such delicacies on Corsica, very few of us declined.



*Pomigliano, May '44*



*Armament a work — Cesenatico, Apr '45*



*KELLY & McHan — Cesenatico, Apr '45*



"Causie" & crew — Jesi, Dec. '44



Living quarters on Line — Cesenatico, Apr. '45



Party for Armament crew — Modna, Dec. '43

The weather in France caused a sharp decline in sorties, compensated for by the good will that slack operations permitted us to spread. The first drops of rain would signal a mass exodus from camp, with McIntosh, Wollangk, Nattrass and Ginuiz in the vanguard, while Laliberte, Caldon, Totten and Gilbert followed close behind. Many quaint squadron legends have their origin in these expeditions.

Leaving France for Italy was almost as unhappy as leaving the States. Jesi was already cold and muddy, and after a month of seasonal "Eyetie" rains it became almost impossible to "navigate". The tent area became a lake, and ten to eighteen inches of water frequently covered tent floors. Mc Kay, Perry and Hanlon barely escaped drowning when a midnight storm carried their "casa" away. Their comments, as they carried their sacks to high ground, were a revelation. "Pappy" Traut carried off all honors as a "mudder", and despite a rather strenuous program, kept his head "muddy but unbowed."

It was good to get out of canvas and into barracks at Fano for the duration of the winter. Here, many new bomb combinations were tried; frags, phosphorous and FTI were used extensively, besides the usual H. E., and "Gloves" Barker and the bomb crew were practically exiled from the sack.

Our British neighbors at Fano had a series of take-off accidents that sent P-40's and P-51's swerving off the runway, through our dispersal area. The armament trailer seemed to be their target, and after several near misses we looked with new interest on take-offs. Foy and Lamborn were chased one day by an erratic P-51, and easily out-distanced several of our slower P-47's in their dash down the airstrip.

Cesenatico, a rather "beat-up" resort town on the Adriatic, was our last stop. Billeted in "Pensiones" and "Hotels" that had formerly housed "Eyetie" vacationers, we had a good view of the beach, and later, it became a popular diversion to sit on the balcony of "Yukon Hall", and watch the aquatic capers of the local signorini. As the war drew to a close we flew the greatest amount of bomb-carrying sorties ever, and sweated frantically to re-bomb and re-load the seemingly endless flights of aircraft. Suddenly, the Jerry collapse came. Through reflex, we still winced when passing the bomb dump, but this gradually disappeared, and a few members of the liberated bomb crew were even seen to thumb their noses at a huge pile of 1000-pounders. Post-hostility cures "Dr. Yvonne's" were soon being taken by most of the burnt-out powder-burners and often at night, while treatment was underway, one could hear mellow and nostalgic references to the desert, "C" Ration, mud, convoys, and even sand.



Sgt. Fred ADZIMA
Racine, Wis.

Pvt. Leonard C. ANDERSON
Seattle, Wash.

T/Sgt. George L. BARKER
Moultrie, Ga.

Sgt. John L. BERG
Reading, Pa.

Sgt. Earl M. BOWDEN
Huron Town, Mich.

Cpl. Emilio A. BREDICE
Waterbury, Conn.



S/Sgt. Lloyd S. BYERLEE
Wichita, Kan.

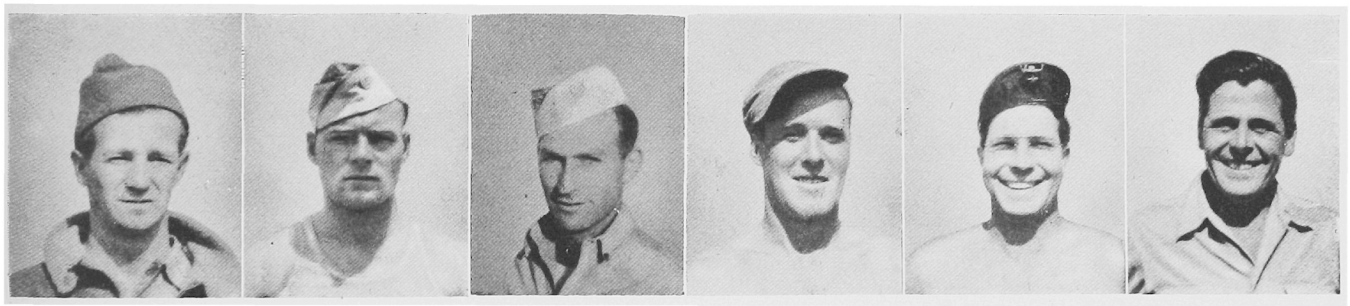
Cpl. Leonard J. CALDON
Somerville, Mass.

S/Sgt. Kenneth F. CALL
Burgettstown, Pa.

S/Sgt. Wayne J. CAUSIE
Jackson, Mich.

Sgt. Anthony J. COLOMBO
Nutter Fort, W. Va.

Pfc. John J. CORBETT
San Francisco Cal.



Cpl. Alfred COUCHON
Easthampton, Mass.

Sgt. Roland S. CROUSS
Springfield, Mass.

S/Sgt. Milton DOZEMAN
Leeland Mich.

Sgt. Frederick E. DUNPHY
So. Portland, Me.

Sgt. James B. FOY
Winston-Salem, N.C.

Cpl. Romeo A. FRANCOEUR
Warren, R.I



Sgt. Robert W. GILBERT
Rutland, Vt.

Cpl. John GINIUSZ
Millers Falls, Mass.

Cpl. Edwin GOLDFARB
Bronx, N. Y.

Sgt. William A. GOWER
Greensburg, Pa.
Soldier's Medal

Sgt. Robert J. HANLON
Tamaqua, Pa.

T/Sgt. Plato HARRELL
Columbia N. C.
Legion of Merit



S/Sgt. Richard M. HENRY
Corsican, Tex.

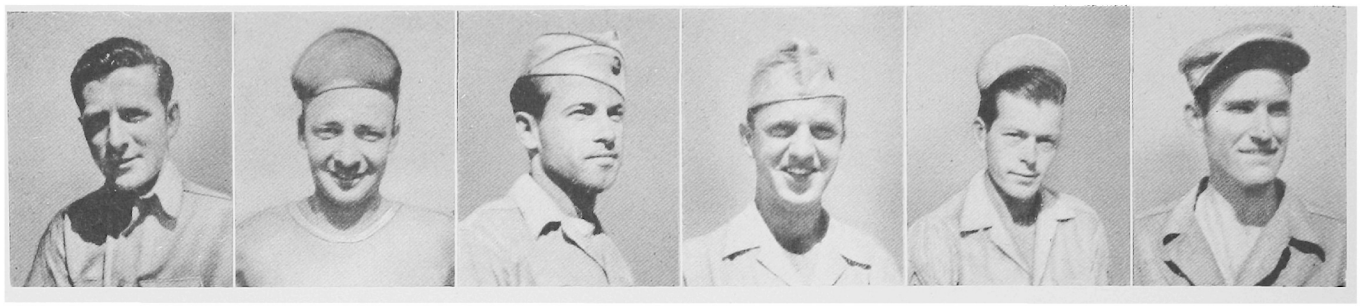
Pvt. Rolfe H. HUNSAKER
Kingmont, W. Va.

Cpl. Chester J. KELLY
Covington, Ky.

Sgt. John J. KELLY
Melrose, Mass.

Sgt. Gerald R. KELTON
Athens, Vt.

Sgt. John S. KROHN
Crandon, Wis.



Sgt. Ernest L. LALIBERTE
Central Falls, R. I.

Sgt. Robert F. LAMBORN
Leavenworth, Kan.

Cpl. Anthony (NMI) LUKAS
Hartford, Conn.

Cpl. Grover J. MACE
New Middletown, O.

Sgt. Thomas A. McINTOSH
Edgerton, Wisc.

Sgt. James S. McKAY
Guin, Ala.



T/Sgt. Earl E. MENZEL
Waconia, Minn.

Sgt. Carmine MOSCATELLO
Bronx, N. Y.

Pfc. David NADATA
Brooklyn, N. Y.

S/Sgt. Hans S. NATTRASS
Rolette, N. D.

S/Sgt. Olan H. OOLEY
Atascadero, Cal.

Cpl. Winfred C. OVERMAN
Hillsboro, N. C.



Sgt. George A. PERRY
Brooklyn, N. Y.

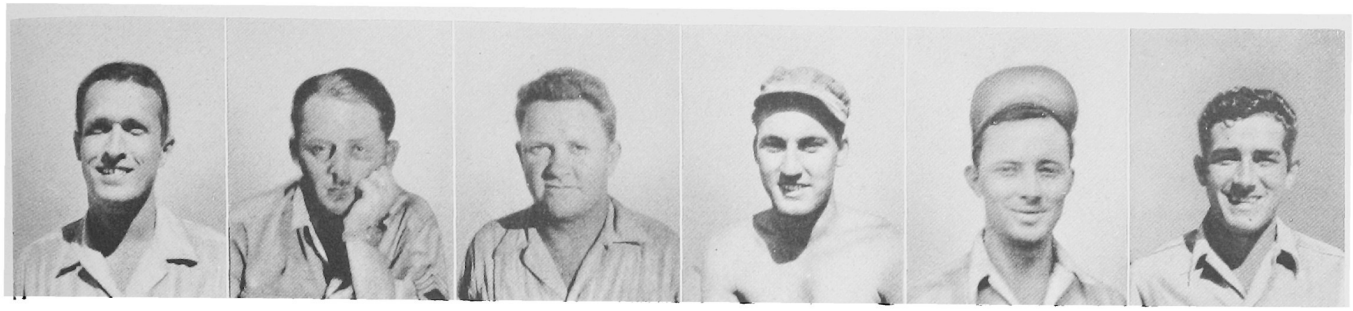
Cpl. William M. PETERMAN
Butler, Ga.

Sgt. Richard A. PHILLIPS
E. Boston, Mass.

Cpl. La Verne H. RATHKE
Eau Claire, Wis.

Sgt. George J. ROBINSON
Bronx, N. Y.

Cpl. Lester D. ROMINGER
Ottumwa, Ia.



Pfc. George S. ROSCHER
Richmond, Va.

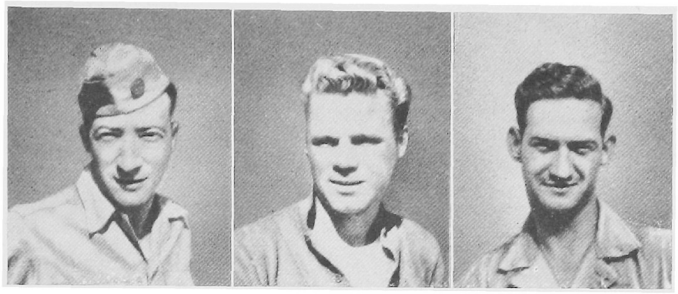
S/Sgt. George R. TOTTEN
Windsor, Conn.

S/Sgt. Rufus T. WATTS
Greenville, Mich.

Cpl. Robert G. WEBER
Portage, Pa.

T/Sgt. Roy M. WELCH
El Monte, Cal.

Cpl. Raymond T. WHITE
Stawberry Plains, Tenn.



Sgt. Donald R. WINEGAR
Fort Anne, N. Y.

S/Sgt. Arden WOLLANGK
Oshkosh, Wis.

Sgt. Raymond E. YOST
Fall River, Mass.

## NOT PICTURED

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pfc. Henry W. ADAMS | Townsend, Mass. | Cpl. Donald E. HINES | |
| Sgt. Herman BLACK | Huntington, W. Va. | Sgt. William G. HOLMAN | Lexington, Mo. |
| Sgt. Earl BOYD | Sant Angels, Tex. | S/Sgt. Napoleon P. ISON | |
| Pfc. Clyde H. CHURCHILL | Charlemont, Mass. | Sgt. Manuel LUCAS, Jr. | New Bedford, Mass. |
| S/Sgt. Leroy N. DEITZ | Ann Arbor, Mich. | Sgt. Cleo McDANIEL | Leesville, La. |
| Pvt. John D. FALIN | | Cpl. Earl J. McDONNELL | Manitowva, Wis. |
| Cpl. Manuel F. FERREIRA | Attlebord, Mass. | T/Sgt. Archie MORISSETTE | Island Pond, Vt. |
| S/Sgt. Willard J. GARNER | San Francisco, Cal. | Cpl. Irving W. MURPHY | |
| Sgt. Leonard D. GATHERS | Erie, Pa. | M/Sgt. Eugene W. PARK | Hutchinson, Kan. |
| Cpl. Roger F. GRIFFIN | Glendive, Mont. | Cpl. Leonard A. SWEET | |
| Cpl. Thomas J. HADDAWAY | | Cpl. Roy V. TRAUT | |



*Some of the boys at Pomigliano, Italy, May 1944*

# Communications

In the States, 'way back in '42, our communications set-up was just like any other, pretty much "G.I." The real "rugged" life didn't begin until after that long voyage, so we must start our story out "in the blue". That's where we found out who the "characters" were; that's where our troubles began.

"Shorty" Morgan headed the original crew of thirty-two men at L.G. 174 in the land of the Pharoahs. And what headaches they had; no switchboard, new type radios, and worn aircraft. Never before had planes been fixed with mere nailfiles and adhesive tape (the latter graciously supplied by 87 Medics). To top it off, we found there was only one frequency meter in the whole of the western desert. Yankee ingenuity came to the rescue and Morgan soon "won" it from the 12th Bombardment Group. Afterwards our radios worked perfectly—the pilots could always hear the Luftwaffe.

"174" was just a small oasis of Yanks amid all the troops of His Majesty's Empire, so Ingman, Goodman, Hardin and Hunt became "Cairo Commandos" for a bit to learn the intricacies of British radio procedure. Here we first encountered the everpresent "Wog", and investigated the mysteries of the Piastre on the trips to Alex. Remember Morgan after one such excursion, toting more bandages on his head than an Egyptian mummy. It wasn't just sand in the switchboard that disrupted communications. We are not sure who it was that discovered Hugie Matthews operating the board with his canteen full of "demon vino" instead of acqua.

At Darragh, we got our V.H.F. sets working consistently, thanks to the great job installation by "B" Party. There was the day that Capt. Stewart, Group Communications Officer, demonstrated the new set. Strangely enough, it set the ship on fire. Here at Darragh, we finally got that RAF Lighthouse to kick out the juice, but only after much rasslin' with the lines by Dick Turner. But the job we really sweated out was that expedition to pull "Jerry" wire out of the local mine fields. About the time that "Chick" Freedman arrived complete with his sparkling repartee from a brief but interesting sojourn in Group, we rigged up that amazing ground station in the "kidney beater". Why it worked at all no one will ever be able to say. It was like Morgan's invention to keep noise-making sand out of the dynamotors—British type toilet paper as a filter over the ends. This resulted in a perfectly noiseless dynamotor that made no noise because it wouldn't run.

Next came Tripoli, and more problems. Dive-bombing was snapping off antenna masts by the dozens. Even the rig devised, using a brace to the tail, proved inadequate when "Ace" Adair flew a ship. Then the first big frequency change, keeping Mann and Rushton burning the midnight oil while the rest of us filled up the spare parts boxes by thoroughly scavengeing the wrecked planes at Castel Benito. 'Long about this time, Craig finally got enough plugs to make a test bench, and Linwood Mann dreamed up that weird but practical dynamotor-tester. And night after night it was vino, vino,—how high was Dave Ortega! Eventually the payoff on the vino situation when Lt. Jonas gave a gas-can full of it to Hughie. Through an oversight, there was still a bit of gas in the can, but nobody noticed the difference, particulary not the "Limey" Ack-Ack boys who helped consume it. Men were men in those days, and stomachs of sterner stuff. Some of our late arrivals even thought "Eyetie" Cognac was rough!

At Causeway the pilots' microphones gave us the most trouble. First leather mikes—just fine, until we

suddenly ran out of them. Then mask mikes, complaints, and the decision to change to rubber throat mikes—more headaches—finally, "Rush" worked out the adapter for using throat mikes with V.H.F. sets, and all could relax for a few days.

Causeway reminds us of certain things: Major "Duke" Uhrich furious for the first time. He was guiding in a crippled ship by radio when a plaintive voice broke in on the ether with "Hello, 77, give me a l-o-o-o-n-g call, this is De Shano, go ahead." And Hughie's expression when informed he would be expected to remain with the switchboard during air-raids. The first blast of Ack-Ack blew Benny "Dubious" Di Menna clear out of his sack, into a nearby slit-trench. But nobody ever did get much sleep anyway.

Kairouan was the next long stop after several halts in our convoy ride from Causeway, halts just long enough to lay down all the telephone lines and pick them up again. En route the spare parts box received another injection, thanks to several P-40's found bellied-in along the road. The field was in pretty good shape, and after the lighting system had been installed, we found only one problem. All our "pilot trouble" resolved itself into one person: "Monsieur" Fitzgerald. "Too loud—too quiet—too noisy—it clicks—it scratches—gimme a new radio". Finally, we removed the set, let it cool off in storage for three days, then re-installed it. Then the report, "O.K. It works fine now—and about time!!"

One day Don Bodger decided no fifty hour inspection was right without a complete overhaul of the radio system. It took the entire section a week to get it back together, while "Scotty" Rogers tore his hair and threatened to strafe the radio shack. Here was organized the famous ball team known as the "J.J.J.J.'s", all players gainfully employed in "Junior Jonas' Jive Joint". A memorable team it was, though not for victories.

Shortly after the boys had returned from radio school, and been farmed out to Group, Jerry collapsed in N. Africa, and the wild scrounging race was on. Everything was plentiful for a change, and radios, generators and sundries were dragged in by the score. De Shano acquired a "Jerry Jeep", which he "gave" to Lt. Jonas, after being persuaded with a motorcycle. 'Tis not true that Junior's silver bar was a factor in the deal.

Up at Cape Bon "B" Party pulled a slightly amazing frequency change in spite of the equipment they had. "A" Party, meanwhile, was at Bou Gara re-fitting for the coming invasion of Sicily. Here, Major Snowden direfully predicted at least ten percent casualties, which immediately prompted "A" Party to appropriate "B" 's beer ration—an action that just fell short of beginning an intra-squadron war.

Malta was a staging area for the eventual jump into Sicily. All in all, it was a picnic except for that famous "Causeway-Malta-Sicily mission". The planes came into our half-way station with radios and I.F.F. out, and only with adept scrounging from "Limeys" at Luqua airdrome were we able to get the ships operational again.

Communications struck its first active blow against the Hun from a Sicilian vineyard midway between Syracuse and Augusta, when "Danny" Donahue pumped a few tracers at the south end of a Focke-Wulfe headed north. No damage was claimed, but those E/A really stayed clear of our area after that—except at night.

After brief stay at Cassibile we entrucked for Palagonia, with Bob Ford driving old "All the way from Alamein", sans shoes. Palagonia had the famed "R. A. Club", where one could drink, play cards, drink, read, or drink while listening to the sweet strains of the communications radio. "Shorty" Morgan rejoined us here just as resistance ended on the island, his broken arm, received during a post-hostilities clash with some "Eytie" P.O.W.s at Cape Bon, healed at last.

During the rapid moves up through Italy our big, top-heavy R.A.F. trailer took all the steep turns without spinning in. Eventually we settled in Foggia, where De Shano, Eide, Ford and Di Menna were kept stepping to keep abreast of torn-up telephone lines. Shortly after arrival Bob Ford was killed in a motorcycle accident, and the loss was keenly felt by the entire squadron.

Here "Chick" Freedman and "Chuck" Lankford had their experience with group's Caproni bomber, crewed by "Eyeties". The pilot evidently was not an instrument man, for en route to Naples he got lost in an overcast, and did a series of involuntary maneuvers over the mountains before he accidentally came out over Capodichino.

Termoli brought the start of Rush Rushton's radio classes, and the boys began to find out what was in the big black boxes they had been putting in the ships for a year. A beat-up old radio truck, destined to give a lot of service, was inherited from Group, and promptly named "Lili Marlene". The biggest success here was the Christmas party when old demon vino had the entire section walking around several feet off the ground. A "P.A." system was installed in one hour flat, so that Junior Jonas might broadcast festive music on it with his infernal "sqeeze-box" The combination of Junior's music and San Severo vino rapidly wore down even the heartiest, and Junior was last seen sliding headlong through the mud into a fox-hole, from which came the last sickening squawk of the "squeeze-box".

Naples, saw the "Rover Boys of Radio" knocking themselves out to install loudspeakers in the barracks. One night we were all routed out of the club to pull a special frequency change for a dawn mission. We made the deadline, but rain cancelled the mission. "That'll happen", they say, and it darn near always did. Two truckloads of teletype equipment arrived; Hughie turned pale. P-40's were retired and the "flying milk bottles"—P-47's—were introduced. Wright Field had said they were a radioman's dream, but our first month was a nightmare. Don Bodger dropped a set of crystals into the innards of one of the new aircraft and was nearly dropped in after them.

Pomigliano, and most of us devoted off-duty hours to the building of the best club to date. Morgan went into a rage when informed that Capt. Galvin must be consulted on all communications matters; Junior was equally indignant. Dionne and Hogue successfully tracked radio noises with a home-made "gremlin locator", but most of the static emanated from a 12th AF Warrant Officer who took a batch of "framis" measurements. Brown and Mattingly became flying control men; Pete Cohen joined us, and had to absorb frequent renditions of the "Desert Song" a la Linder, Gibson and Dionne. Newcomers Maneval and Nanginelli fled to the hills barely after being introduced, and then came the "invasion" of Corsica.

Corsica was first "occupied" by a communications air echelon of Jonas, Young, Brown, Bodger, Siddoway, Donahue and Eide, all of whom were later grateful that they had chosen C-47's instead of the sickening L.S.T. ride. Danny Donahue, "ye olde nimrod", immediately went boar hunting, but returned with nothing but sore feet. Communications had a private swimminghole at first, but we were soon discovered.

France was a return to the desert scrounging, rapid moves, and many other things quite unlike the desert. We installed P. A. systems at several fields which attracted local French for miles around. That's about all for France that may be printed here. Mais Oui!



*SQUADRON AREA, JESI, Dec. '44*

Jesi and mud. Junior left us here for thirty days in the States, shortly followed by Linder and Di Menna. Encore mud.

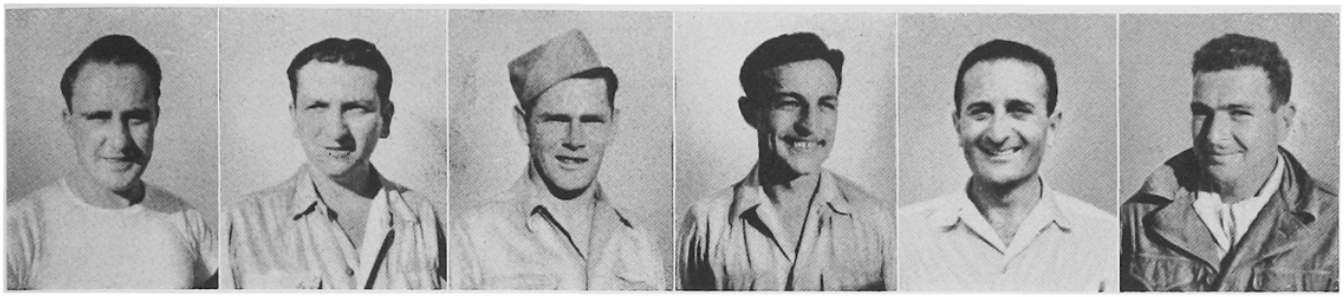
"Lili Marlene" succumbed shortly after arrival at Fano, when she broke an axle on a mission to the Red Cross club. Hogue and Dionne went on a "shoofti" mission in the B-25 that resulted in Jimmy catching a hatful of flak in the derriere, and "Truck" losing a coat sleeve.

At Cesenatico, the "Riviera of the Adriatic", things were kept humming on the line, with all occupied with the final "big push". Strange faces appeared, and some of the old stand-bys found their way home. V-E finally arrived, and we had just begun planning a life of indolence when forty aircraft from other groups arrived.

Out of the sack again, patching up the battered old planes inherited from other outfits—an ending

very similar to the beginning, so long ago. It's been a combination of easy-going and a lot of laughs, and tough going and experiences we shall never forget. Communications, like the mail, have always gone through, even if noone else will say it. You always got batteries for your flashlight, didn't you?





Sgt. Donald W. BODGER
Alton, Ill.

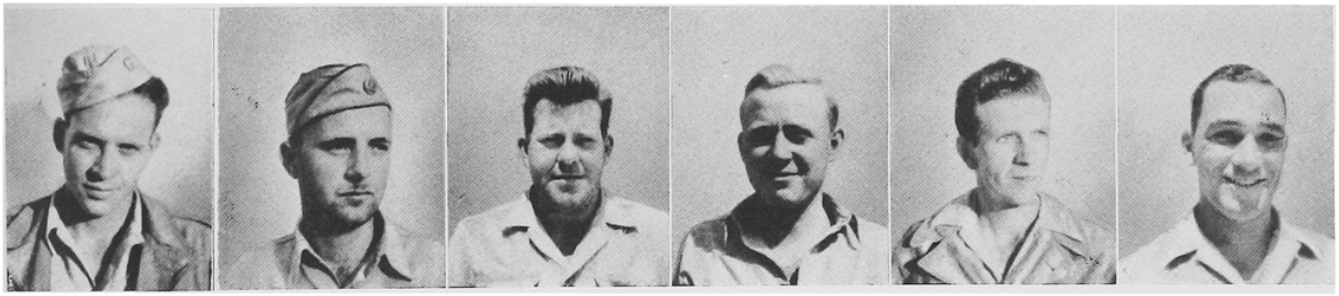
Cpl. Felix COHEN
New York, N.Y.

Sgt. William F. CRAIG
Patterson, N. J.

Cpl. Norman J. DeSHANO
Auburn, Mich.

Cpl. Benjamin J. DiMENNA
Bridgeport, Conn.

S/Sgt. Daniel J. DONAHUE, Jr.
Fairfield, Me.



Sgt. Lloyd T. EIDE
Glasgow, Mont.
Bronze Star Medal

Sgt. Marion GIBSON
Huntsville, Ala.

T/Sgt. Thomas R. HOGUE
West Middlesex, Pa.

S/Sgt. Dale L. HOYT
Pullman, Mich.

S/Sgt. Charles C. LANKFORD
Elsmere, Dela.

S/Sgt. Kenneth C. LINDER
Fullerton, Pa.



Cpl. Jesse E. LUTEN, Jr.
Mineral Wells, Tex.

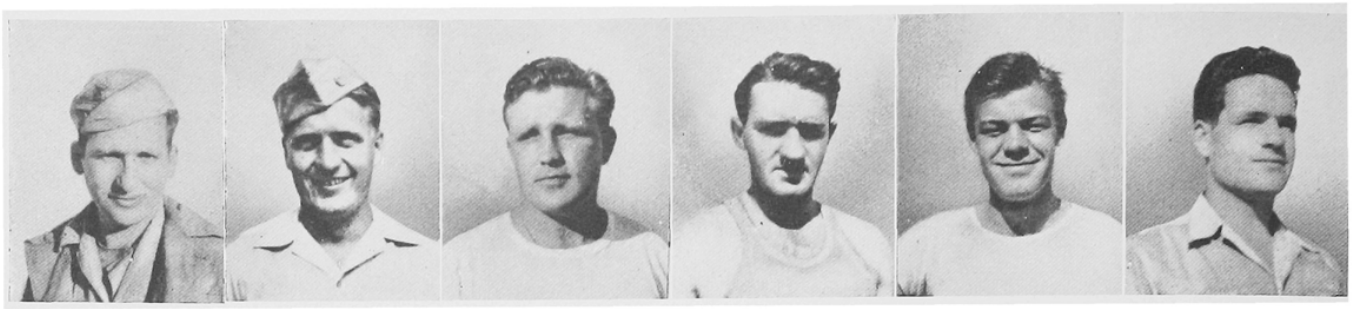
Sgt. Charles G. MATTINGLY
Gorham, Ill.

Sgt. James A. McGRAW
Charlotte, N. C.

Sgt. Forrest R. OWINGS
Temple, City, Cal.

Sgt. Philip G. ROTH
Portland, Ore.

Cpl. Harry A. RYBOCK
Glasgow, Mont.



Cpl. Philip H. SCHNEIDER
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Cpl. Lawrence A. SCHOEN
Gladstone, Neb.

Sgt. Gail R. SIDDOWAY
Oakley, Utah

Sgt. Henry C. THOMAS, Jr.
Buffalo, N. Y.

Cpl. Allen K. TURBEVILLE
Hammond, Ind.

Pfc. Leonard D. WHITE
Abilene, Tex.



T/Sgt. Billy M. YOUNG
Dike, Tex.

## NOT INDIVIDUALLY PICTURED:

| | |
|---|---|
| S/Sgt. Robert C. BROWN | Columbus, O. |
| Sgt. Albert COHEN | New Haven, Conn. |
| S/Sgt. James H. DIONNE | Somerville, Mass. |
| | Purple Heart |
| Cpl. Robert Q. FORD | Lowell, N. C. |
| | Died in Line of Duty |
| Sgt. Samuel GOODMAN | Brooklyn, N.Y. |
| Cpl. Kenneth E. HARDIN | |
| Cpl. Emmett E. HUNT | |
| S/Sgt. LaVern INGMAN | Wheaton, Minn. |
| T/Sgt. Linwood E. MANN | Conroe, Tex. |
| Sgt. Edwin J. MARCOE | |
| S/Sgt. Hugh J. MATTHEWS | Brooklyn, N.Y. |
| Sgt. James E. McGUIRE | Teaneck, N. J. |
| M/Sgt. Ralph J. MORGAN | Charlotte, N. C. |
| T/Sgt. Richard D. RUSHTON | Sidney, N.Y. |
| | Died in Line of Duty |
| Sgt. Richard R. TURNER | Brookville, O. |
| Sgt. Raymond P. WNUKOWSKI | Buffalo, N.Y. |

# Engineering

To write of the men in Engineering with due honor to all, would take many pages. In over two and one-half years away from "the States" we have operated from all conceivable types of landing grounds: primitive air strips on the desert, beaches of the Mediterranean, wheat fields, grass patches, waste lands, and some of the best German and Italian fields captured during our advance. Each of them presented different problems for operating; some were pleasant, others definitely not.

Our planes took part in every kind of warfare that a fighter aircraft may be put to: fighter sweeps, dive-bombing missions, bomber escorts and "intercepts". invariably, we operated close to the front lines; the closer the better. Many times we could see the flashes and hear the sounds of the front line guns.

There were times, on the desert of Egypt and Libya, when crew chiefs maintained their aircraft with only a screw-driver and a pair of pliers. Men had to work while sand was getting into their eyes and into delicate plane parts and instruments, yet maintenance kept pace with combat requirements.

Many times the boys worked around the clock to return a combat-shattered aircraft to service. The coming of night was no interruption; just turn on a flashlight and keep working. The crew chiefs would go to their planes, long before dawn, to prepare them for a first-light take-off.

Through the African campaigns; the fight for Italy; the operations from Corsica and France; to the final wind-up in Italy, the Line Chief and Flight Chiefs were kept busy checking the status of the planes returning from missions, taking the most effective steps to quickly return the maximum number of aircraft to combat. Squadron technical inspectors insured a uniform level of maintenance by frequent inspections of records, aircraft, installations, etc.

The Engineering section, were the heavyweights of the department. To them came crippled aircraft in varying degrees of disrepair; smashed wing-tips, buckled landing gears, shattered rudders, ailerons, and aircraft needing new engines. The Engineering Chief maneuvered his team of specialists—propeller men, instrument workers, electricians, mechanics—with skill and dispatch to maintain a steady return of aircraft to combat. During one particularly vital phase, thirty-six hours after an aircraft needing a new engine and other major repairs was towed into their dispersal area, it was returned, completely serviceable, to combat.

Prompt gas and oil servicing became more of a problem than merely thrusting a nozzle into a tank. Our re-fueling men became so quietly efficient as to go unnoticed; yet the speed with which we met calls for missions was as dependent upon their efforts as any other single factor.

"Jerry" flak, as any pilot will tell you, was often quite accurate, inflicting holes and tears—from openings barely bigger than a pinprick to jagged holes many inches in diameter. The Sheet-metal men, grafted new aluminium and fabric skin on these "wounded" P-47's and P-40's.

The Engineering Office was maintained by two clerks who kept status boards and records accurately reflecting the maintenance situation, permitting the CO and Ops Officer to estimate the extent of the combat effort.



*Moving on Corsica, August '44*

The parachute riggers insured that pilot's vital personal equipment—parachutes, dinghies, etc., were kept in perfect condition. That old Air Corps gag about parachutes, "If it doesn't work, bring it back", never applied here.

Our squadron painters occasionally turned to camouflage, but their main occupation was painting insignia, names and numerals on aircraft. Many of the names and devices they executed on aluminium became squadron classics: "La Derriere Rouge", "Wakefield Cannon Ball", "Du bist kaput", gremlin-like figures, menacing animals and the slightly lopsided Varga girls.

Technical supply was a gigantic hardware store furnishing anything from a bolt to an airplane engine. "Scrounging" was a fine art and a professional necessity in this section; the best scroungers in the Mediterranean theatre have passed through our squadron.

The crew chiefs, responsible for the mechanical ability of the plane, made periodic inspections, and corrected defects reported by pilots. These were the boys with the most intimate personal concern for the aircraft (excluding the pilot, while in flight, of course); they literally sweated their "ships" up and down.

The overall responsibility fell upon the Engineering Officer, coordinating the Line Chief, Flight Chiefs, Engineering Chief and Inspectors. Always in close contact with the pilots, he learned of airplane performance, and from this evolved maintenance technique.

This was the teamwork necessary to keep thirty-plus intricate aircraft serviceable for sustained operations, under field conditions. Fundamentally the formula was: each man thoroughly knowing his job, and consistently making a maximum effort.

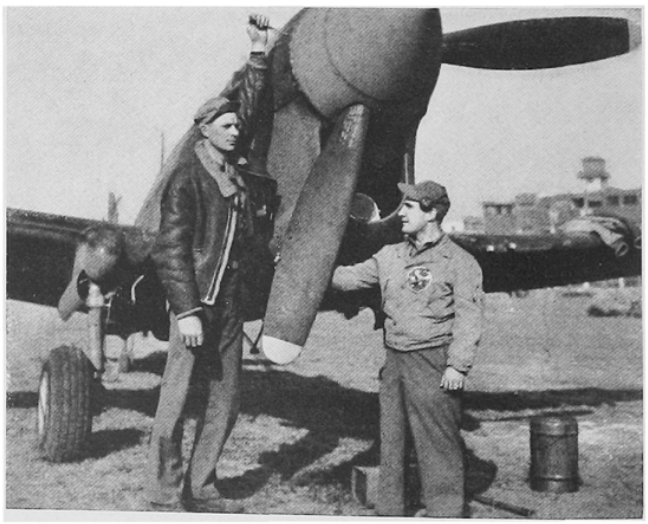
A ranking achievement was chalked up at Naples, where the desert-proved but aging P-40's were replaced by the new P-47's. We operated at full pitch during the transition period and despite great mechanical differences between the two types of aircraft, effected the change-over without losing a day of operations.

Then there was the day-long attack against an important Jerry airfield in Northern Italy, in mid-winter 1945, back at cold and muddy Fano. Seventy-six sorties were sent out against the target that day, to establish a squadron high, and contribute to the Group record for the greatest number of sorties ever flown in a single day by a like organization. These and other events convinced us we were the best Engineering section in the best Squadron in the Air Force. Ahem!

It has been a long war and while we certainly would have been happy to see it end the day we landed at Suez, none of us would have missed those two and one-half years spent skirting the "Med"; nor would we wish it to do over again.

Not all our time was spent chasing oil leaks and changing engines. Many incidents occured that will be remembered when technical feats are forgotten, to wit:

The bullet wound Glenn Thomazin received at Lyon—he did not get a Purple Heart . . . "Stinky" Loscalso pursuing snipe in the desert at Kairouan . . . Miners, who was first in the squadron; but not in war,

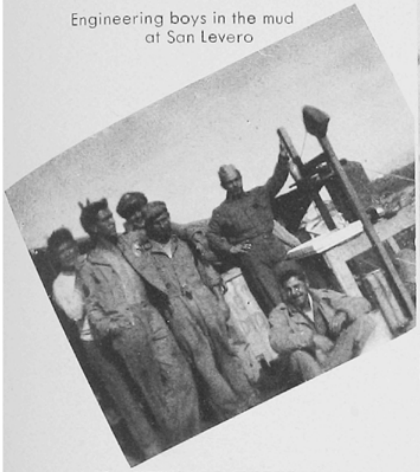


*Van der Ploeg and Bodger (Capodichino)*

Crew Chiefs (Pomigliano)



Engineering boys in the mud at San Levero



Sullivan & Henke with X 74 at Fano

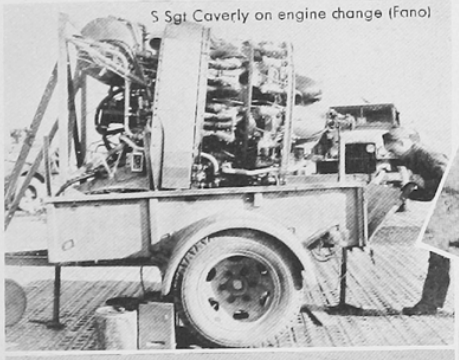




Tech Supply ("Pomig")



S Sgt Caverly on engine change (Fano)



Johnson receiving S. M. from Gen. Myers at Cesenatico





In the middle:
Bagian, D.F.C., and Osip (Fano)

Bitzer & his boys at Cesenatico

peace, or the hearts of his countrymen . . . "Doc" Savage, S/Sgt. (jg), whose universal panacea for all mechanical ills was a sparking new tail wheel . . . Bill (The Grand Old Man) Gardner, sometimes called "Capish" . . . his lecture in the museum at Alex; his continued activities in Sicily and Southern Italy; and his final research at Naples and Pomigliano, were the envy of the younger men . . . "Koon" Saltzman hurriedly leaving a tent at Fano when a British P-51 crashed into it, and neglecting to retrieve certain essential items of apparel . . . Tex Thompson scurrying madly for a hole during a practice Ack-Ack barrage at Palagonia . . . "Gandhi" Daves' jump from the wing of an airplane when an Me-109 strafed our Cassibile airbase. He landed on a live sparkplug of a portable generator, and became the day's only casualty . . . Capt. "The Lip" Cirrito—his generous lower lip could assume angles and attitudes more expressive than words . . . "Rip Cord" Tieman banging away on the piano until the wee hours at the "Pomig Club" . . . "Rasputin" Tallen—he could get rumors for you wholesale . . . Harry "Brow" Dillon socking a Wog horse on the nose when it refused to halt promptly . . . Mulligan and Weaver: The Lushwell Boys, who have been known to take a drink . . . "Muscles" Burnett, the meatless one . . . "Chief" Burns starting a paratroop scare during the early days in Sicily when he dived through the top of a dug-in pup-tent in the middle of the night . . . The Thanksgiving Day trip to Alex . . . Gibbons' daily pilgrimage to Kairouan—it's doubtful if he went there motivated by the same principals as our unwashed Wog neighbors . . . "Available" Sims taking all bets that we would go home at the end of the African Campaign . . . "Gebroni" Raco pursuing Signorine from Calabria to Milan . . . "Moustache" Nero's 'rest' camp at Rome; how restful . . . "Greek" Melanokis' commuting between Italy and Alex on the B-25, culminating in his being engaged . . . The Rome, Naples and Lyon "Campaigns"—no BATTLE stars were authorized, but in some respects they were much more strenuous than those officially recognized. This was our life—wish you had been there.



Sgt. Orville H. ADCOCK
Flushing, Mich.

Cpl. Raymond F. ANDERSON
Alexandria, Minn.

S Sgt. Ross F. BERGAMINO
East Palestine, O.

S Sgt. Hugh W. BERRY
Saluda, S. C.

S Sgt. Ralph M. BING
Fitzgerald, Ga.

M Sgt. Athur R. BITZER
Ingram, Pa.



S Sgt. Edward L. BRASWELL
Wilmington, N. C.

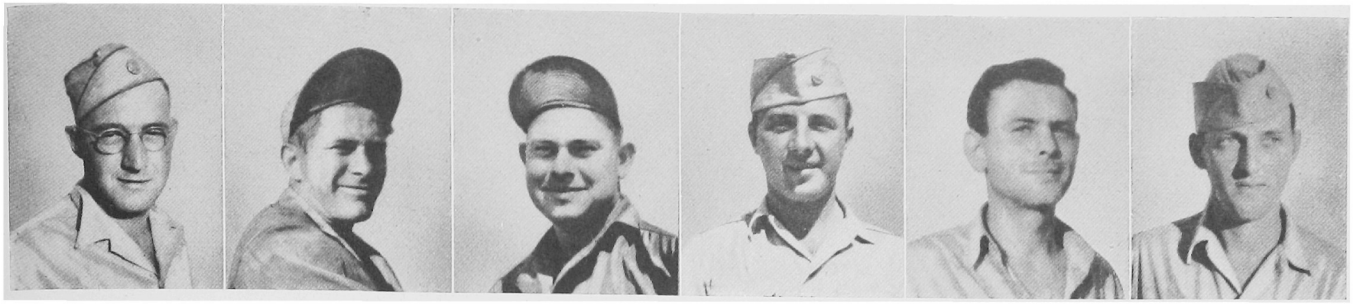
Pfc. Robert L. BOVINET
Galatia, Ill.

Cpl. Wallace E. BURNS
Lac Du Flambeau, Wis.

Pfc. Lewis A. BURNETT
Lynn, Mass.

S/Sgt. Raymond S. BURNETT
East Brewton, Ala.

S/Sgt. Thurman W. BURROW
Linden, Tex.



Cpl. Charles O. CASSELL
Marysville, Pa.

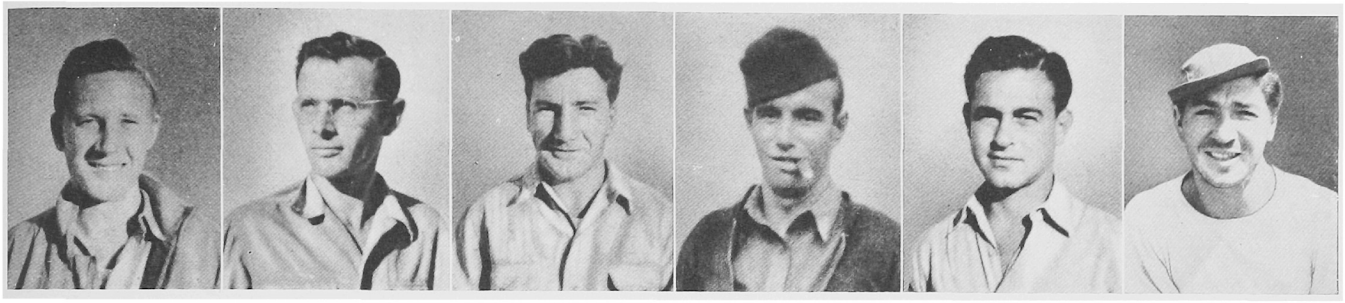
S/Sgt. Philip CAVERLY
Hamilton, Mass.

S/Sgt. Marion T. COLEMAN
Carpenter, Miss.
Soldier's Medal

Sgt. Rudy COTTAGE
Glenfield, Pa.

T/Sgt. Peter R. COZZETTI
Sterling, Col.

S/Sgt. Charles P. CRY
Sunnyvale, Cal.



Sgt. Chas. C. CUNNINGHAM
Warren, O.

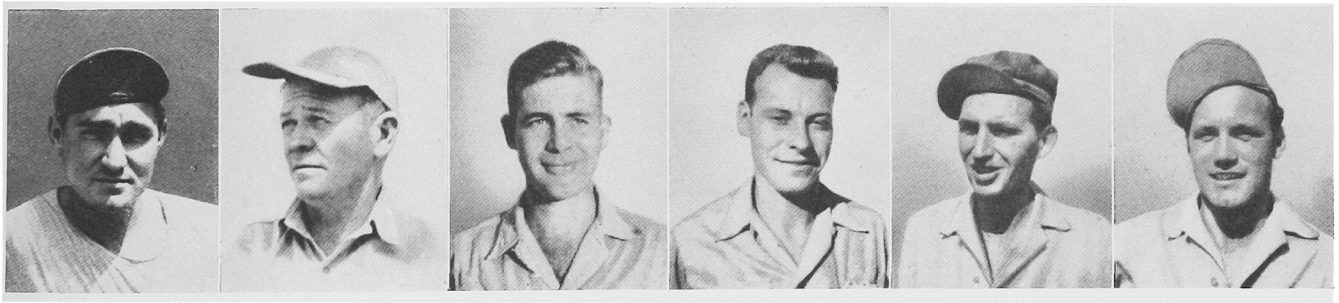
Sgt. Roel DAVES
Atlanta, Ga.

S/Sgt. Harry J. DILLON
Kearny, N. J.

Cpl. Charles F. DOHERTY
Everett, Mass.

T/Sgt. Charles J. DUCOFF
Galveston, Tex.

S/Sgt. Howard J. FARMER
Vancouver, Wash.



S/Sgt. Ralph E. FARMER
Vancouver, Wash.
Soldier's Medal

M/Sgt. Bill R. GARDNER
San Antonio, Tex.
Bronze Star Medal

Sgt. Thomas R. GIBBINS
McAlester, Okla.

Cpl. Ches. Z. GROCHOWSKI
Northampton, Mass.

Cpl. Cecil J. HARSH
Superior, Wis.

S/Sgt. Harold V. HATT
Lansing, Mich.



S/Sgt. John H. HAYNES
Montague, Tex.

Sgt. Leo M. HENKE
Bloomington, Kan.

M/Sgt. Edwin B. HUTCHINSON
Victoria, Tex.

S/Sgt. George F. IBAUGH
Columbia, Pa.

S/Sgt. Earl E. JOHNSON
St. Louis, Mo.
Soldier's Medal

Sgt. William J. JOHNSON, Jr.
Hamburg, Ark.



S/Sgt. Joseph P. JUPTNER, Jr.
Detroit, Mich.

Pvt. Lawrence J. KANE
Chicago, Ill.

T/Sgt. William J. KLINE
Roanoke, Va.

S/Sgt. Howard H. KNIGHT
Waterloo, Iowa

Pvt. Richard F. KOHLHOFF
Baltimore, Maryland

Cpl. Andrew J. KOSCHAK
Hudson, Pa.



T/Sgt. John E. LANGHOFF
New Orleans, La.

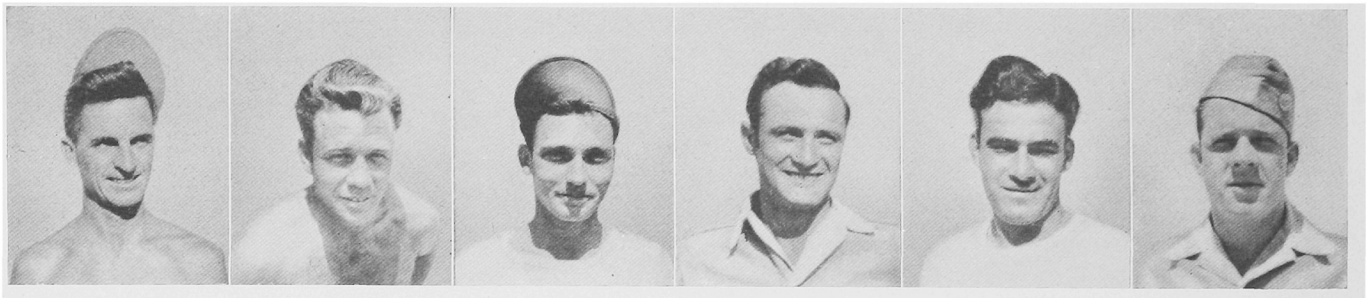
Cpl. Jefferson C. LANIER, Jr.
Atlanta, Ga

S/Sgt. Bernard D. LOMMORI
Albuquerque, N. M.

Cpl. George S. LOOPER
Gastonia, N. C.

S/Sgt. Rocco A. LOSCALZO
Hartfield, Conn.

Pvt. Otis K. LOWE
San Francisco, Cal.



S/Sgt. Edward C. MAAS
Benton Harbor, Mich.

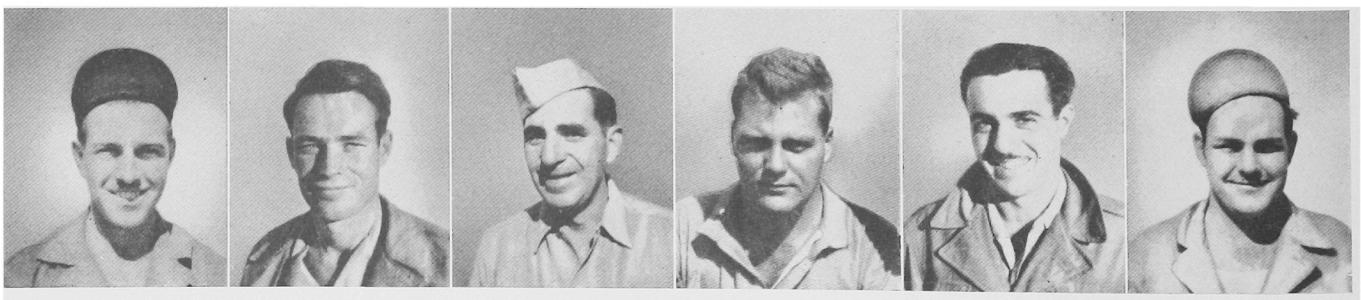
Sgt. Bernard C. MARTIN
Berlin, N. Y.

S/Sgt. Roger J. McAVOY
Forest Park, Ill.

Cpl. Jesse M. McHAN
Blanket, Tex.

S/Sgt. Pete M. MELONAKIS
Denver, Col.

Cpl. Kenneth H. MINERS
Charlotte, N. C.



S/Sgt. Jack L. MORRIS
Rydal, Ga.

S/Sgt. Floyd L. MULLEN
Detroit, Mich.
Soldier's Medal

Pvt. Edmond J. MULLIGAN
Carnegie, Pa.

M/Sgt. Ray W. MYERS
Danville, Ill.

S/Sgt. Vincent J. NERO
Philadelphia, Pa.
Bronze Star

Cpl. Robert S. NICHOLS
Redmond, Ore.



Sgt. Harry B. OBERLIN
Elsie, Mich.

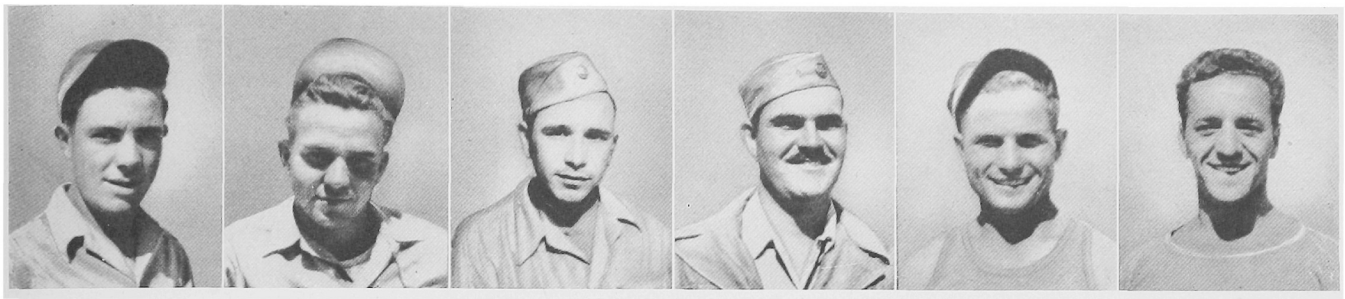
Sgt. Louis J. OSIP
Everson, Pa.

Cpl. Stanley F. PAPERNIAK
Philadelphia, Pa.

Sgt. Henry L. POCZCIWINSKI
Buffalo, N.Y.

T/Sgt. James V. RACO
Fresno, Cal.

S/Sgt. Russell L. RAKESTRAW
Muskegon Heights, Mich.



T/Sgt. Truman W. RANDOLPH
Lebanon, Miss.

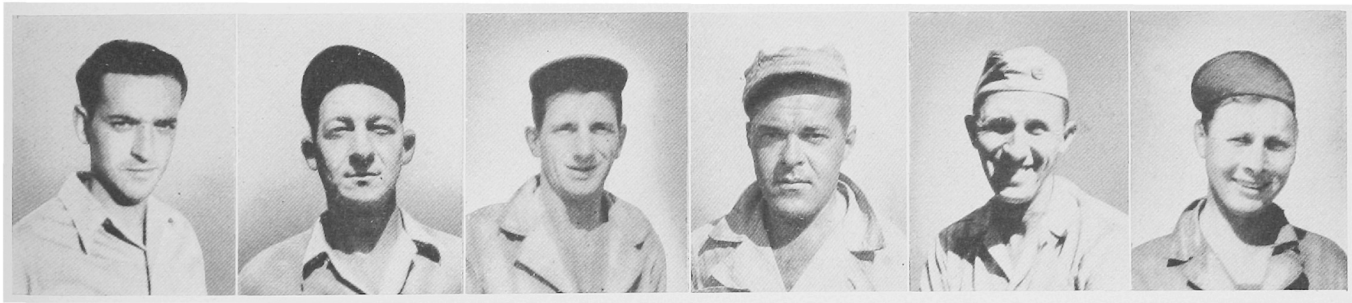
Sgt. George R. RICHARDS
Charlotte, N. C.

S/Sgt. Michael A. RUSSO
Worcester, Mass.

S/Sgt. Edward V. SALTZMAN
Gueydan, La.

S/Sgt. Richard G. SAVAGE
Ft. Wayne, Ind.

S/Sgt. Wilbur R. SCHUBERT
Pittsburgh, Pa.



Sgt. Siegfried SCHUSTER
Flushing, L. I. N.Y.

Pfc. Clarence J. SCHWANITZ
Cleveland, O.

S/Sgt. Leslie A. SHUGART, Jr.
Yadkinville, N. C.

S/Sgt. Henry P. SIDOROWICZ
Long Island City, N.Y.

Cpl. Nelt E. SMITH
Albion, Mich.

S/Sgt. Walter B. SNOOK, II
Maricopa, Cal.



S/Sgt. Sterling J. SULLIVAN
Kinmundi, Ill.

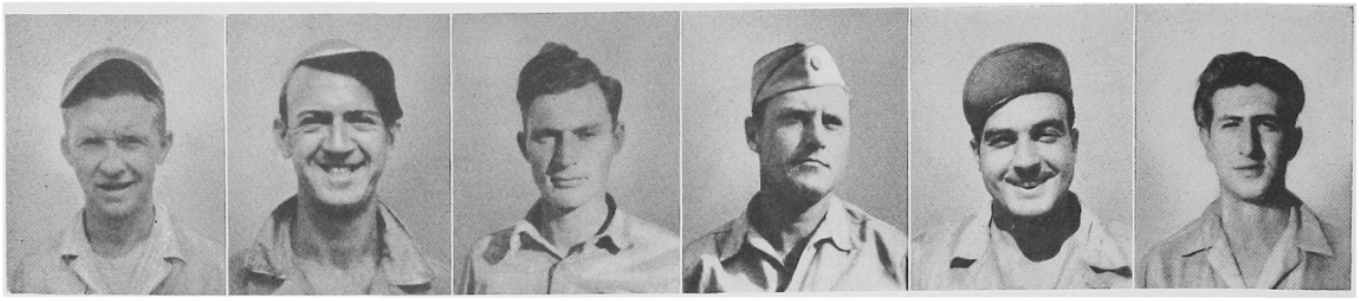
S/Sgt. Robert P. SWITZER
Woodborne, N.Y.

S/Sgt. Stanley M. TALLEN
Emporia, Kan.

S/Sgt. Alvin R. TEAL
Averill Park, N.Y.
Soldier's Medal

S/Sgt. Glenn L. THOMAZIN
St. Edward, Neb.

S/Sgt. Lloyd P. THOMPSON
Paris, Tex.



S/Sgt. Wilburn E. THOMPSON, Russellville, Mo. | Sgt. William E. TIEMANN, Baltimore, Md. | S/Sgt. Herm. L. Van der PLOEG, Kanawna, Ia. | S/Sgt. Joseph L.F.VIOLETTE, Skowhegan, Me. | Sgt. Charles G. WALKER, Millport, Pa. | Sgt. Loren D. WEAVER, Marion, Ind.

## ENGINEERING NOT INDIVIDUALLY PICTURED:



S/Sgt. Troy E. WEEMS, Jr.
Chicago, Ill.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| S/Sgt. Willard E. ALBERTS | | T/Sgt. Robert A. MAYES | Weir, Tex. |
| M/Sgt. John M. ALMAND | Haynesville, La. | T/Sgt. George E. MURRAY | Americus, Ga. |
| T/Sgt. James O. BATCHLOR | Coushatta, La. | Sgt. Norris O. OLSON | Clermont, Ia. |
| | Soldier's Medal | Sgt. Russell RAYMOND | |
| Sgt. Ferris O. BLANKESHIP | Watertown, N. Y. | S/Sgt. Sherrill ROARK | Houston, Tex. |
| S/Sgt. Richard P. BORCHARDT | Hutchinson, Minn. | S/Sgt. Matthew A. RODICH | |
| | Soldier's Medal | S/Sgt. Leonard W. SERVIS | Newark, N.J. |
| Sgt. Lawrence J. DAMATO | Hartford, Conn. | Sgt. Stanley V. SESKY | Youngstown, O. |
| T/Sgt. George R. DARBY | El-Verano, Calif. | T/Sgt. Sim K. SIMS | Shawnee, Okla. |
| S/Sgt. Dale K. ECKELBARGER | Ithaca, Mich. | Sgt. John E. SMITH | Llano, Tex. |
| S/Sgt. William W. GOODRELL | Bell, Calif. | S/Sgt. John H. STROUP | Gravelton, Mo. |
| Cpl. Edward L. HAMMOND | | Sgt. Donald H. STUART | |
| Sgt. Frank M. KLIMESH | | Sgt. John F. TARCZUESKI | Shelburn, Ind. |
| Pfc. Eugene KOSZALINSKI | | S/Sgt. Chester T. VAN CLEAVE | Albuquerque, N. M. |
| S/Sgt. Roy E. LOZAR | Roseville, Calif. | S/Sgt. Clarence E. WATTERS | |
| S/Sgt. Henry A. MARTINEZ | | | |

## ENGINEERING NECKNAMES:

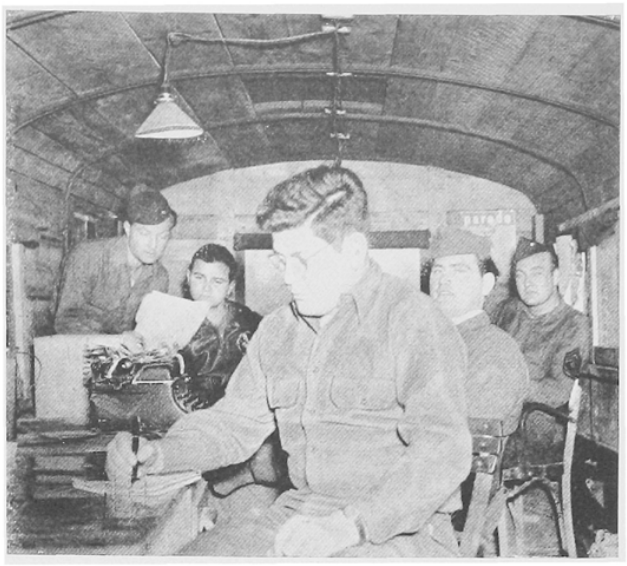
Bitzer—"Abie the Whip"
Almand—"Maxie"
Gardner—"Old Plug", "Capish"
Myers—"Chubby"
Hutchison—"Hutch"
Batchelor—"Batch"
Mayes—"Lucy"
Langhoff—"Johnny", "Peanut"
Raco—"Gibroni", "Lover"
Randolph—"Windy"
Ducoff—"Duke"
Sims—"Available"
Kline—"Rotation", "Pop Corn"
Darby—"Eye Brows"
Murray—"Dog Gone"
Cozzetti—"Pete"
Poczwinski—"Hank"
Koczilinski—"Gene"
Alberts—"Wog"
Damata—"Larry", "Lorenzo"
Doherty—"Charlie"
Lozar—"Pappy"
Stroup—"Hollis"
Farmer, H.—"Little 'Un"
Farmer, R.—"Big 'Un"
Borchardt—"Sunshine"
Raymond—"Red", "Tramp"
Van Cleave—"Van"
Stuart—"Shorty", "Danny Deaver"
Tarczueski—"Polock"
Smith, J.—"Smitty"

Hammond—"Curly"
Klimesh—"Wood Worm"
Goodrell—"Grand Ma", "Granny"
Griffin—"Sheep Herder"
Roark—"Sour Puss"
Servis—"Red"
Sesky—"Skeets"
Martinez—"Spic"
Olson—"Oley", "Preacher"
Blankenship—"Pop", "Blank"
Eckelbarger—"Liver Lip"
Bergamino—"Bergy", "Walyo"
Berry—"Hugo Van Nottingham Wilson Speed Berry III"
Bing—"Carrot Top"
Braswell—"Bras"
Burnett, R.—"Muscles"
Burrow—"Buck", "Rambler"
Caverly—"Pop"
Coleman—"Blubber", "Big Barnsmell"
Cry—"C. P."
Dillon H. "Horse", "Brow"
Hatt—"Smokey"
Haynes—"Gentleman John"
Ibaugh—"The Nose"
Johnson, E.—"Johnny", "Noisy"
Juptner—"Jupe"
Knight—"Howdy"
Lommori—"B. D.", "Stooge"
Loscalzo—"Stinky"
Maas—"Mouse", "Eddie"

McAvoy—"Mac", "Roge"
Melonakis—"Greek", "Face"
Morris—"Jackson"
Mullen—"Moon"
Nero—"Black Moustache", "Lil'Wolf"
Rakestraw—"Rake"
Russo—"Stumpy"
Savage—"Doc", "Tail Wheel"
Schubert—"Moe", "Wimpy"
Shugart—"Shug", "Horse Trader"
Snook—"Baby"
Sullivan—"Sully"
Switzer—"Bob", "Hosinfefer"
Tallen—"Goat Head", "The Mouth"
Teal—"Al", "Flat Top"
Thomazin—"Two gun"
Thompson, L.—"Tex", "Lonesome Polecat"
Thompson, W.—"Tommie"
Van der Ploeg—"Dutch", "Lemonade"
Violette—"Fred", "Frog"
Weems—"Ted"
Cottage—"Rudy"
Daves—"Ferocious", "Gandhi"
Gibbins—"Gib", "Gibbo"
Henke—"Henkle 177"
Johnson, W.—"Johnny", "Bob Burns"
Martin—"Barney"
Osip—"De Bum", "Louie"
Richards—"Lightning", "Dick"
Saltzman—"Saltz", "Koon"

Schuster—"Ziggy", "West Wall"
Sidorowicz—"Sid", "Hank"
Tiemann—"Rip Cord"
Walker—"Rochester"
Anderson, R.—"Andy"
Burns—"Chief"
Cassell—"One peach"
Grochowski—"Polock", "Chet"
Harsh—"Sleepy"
Koschak—"Andy"
Lanier—"Jeff", "Curly"
Looper—"Lupe"
McHan—"Mac", "Horizontal"
Miners—"Queer"
Nichols—"Nick"
Papierniak—"Pap"
Smith, N.—"Smitty"
Stevenson—"The Hair", "Buck Jones"
Bovinet—"Bob", "Crash"
Burnett, L.—"Lew"
Low—"Chink", "Chop Chop"
Roscher—"Rochester"
Schwanitz—"Swanny"
Cunningham—"Chuck"
Oberlin—"Obie", "Cotter Pin"
Weaver—"Buck"
Cirrito—"Sir Echo", "The Lip"
Thomas, H.—"Sledge Hammer"
Bell—"Jimmie the Kid"
Mulligan—"Lushwell"
Webb—"Smiley"

# Orderly Room



And it came to pass that the Eighty Seventh Squadron was transported into a foreign land, yea, even to the land of the Pharoahs and into that desert land beyond the Nile. And there was a war upon that land and upon the face of all the lands.

In the midst of the multitude there was a place of paper and of many records. A tent there was there in the host of men and machines; a place of prophets, and its name was called orderly room, tho' forsooth it was many times not orderly and seldom a room. And it was ordained that this should be the place of commandments and of consolation in troubled times and that it should go with the squadron in its very midst through all its long journey; that it should forever operate though all the heavens and earth be turned against it in all manners of rain and sand and snow and pestilences.

Yea, so it was ordained and so it journeyed through many lands, and it was known among many peoples around about that sea called Mediterranean and even unto the Alps and the Land of the Franks. A place of dread to the wrong-doer, of comfort for the troubled, and of direction for all men.

It was the place of promotions and payrolls, yea too of demotions and deductions; of rosters and routine, of details and inspections, and many were the words spoken and written here. Even within the sanctum were received the words of those in high places and great was the import thereof. Here was known joy and sadness and many surprises, and he who came "on the double" had much cause to tremble.

But withal it was the heart of the squadron and laughed and worked even as the squadron. And its men were good and valiant men, for it is through them that we go our way with records in order and with a happy heart into a civilian world. May they also rest in the joy of a life without filing cabinets and without morning reports.



S/Sgt. Geo. W. GALLAGHER, Jr.
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Sgt. David ORTEGA
Los Angeles, Cal.

Cpl. Norman M. RUBIN
Brooklyn, N. Y.

S Sgt. Wayne F. SMITH
Los Angeles, Cal.

**NOT INDIVIDUALLY PICTURED:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Pvt. Fred L. BAKER | Indianapolis, Ind. |
| 1st Sgt. Wilbur E. COLLINS | Youngstown, O. |
| 1st Sgt. Charles D. COYNE | East New Market, Md. |
| Pfc. Robert L. Creek | |
| T Sgt. Robert F. DRUM | Rockville Centre, L. I., N.Y. |
| S Sgt. Eddy O. ERICKSON | Chicago, Ill. |

# S-2 and Operations

Back in Corsica, in the 87th Fighter Wing, they used to call S-2 and Operations the "War Room". Its personnel were the "Staff", and they always wore ties and brushed their hair hourly. They carried great quantities of multi-colored pins in their mouths as they decorously glided from map to map; or frowned with dignity (this is quite an accomplishment with a mouthful of pins) upon sheafs of important looking red-bordered documents at name-plate bearing desks. The atmosphere was austere and military, broken only by an occasional "Gentlemen, this is it!"

Back in Corsica (and many other places), in the 87th Fighter Squadron, they used to call S-2 and Ops a variety of things, but never "War Room". Its personnel too were the epitome of military perfection, except they never carried pins in their mouths (Sgt. Double once had a near tragedy because of this practice). The atmosphere was one of complete dignity (no spitting on the floor permitted) punctuated by periodic cries of "Gin", or "What do You want?", or "Answer the phone".

All this began at Landing Ground No. 174, our first base in the western desert. Twas there that "X", who wishes to remain unsung, was picked up by British M.P's during a noisy international altercation in an Alexandria cafe. A mournful two days he spent in an ex-P.O.W. compound. Everyone started "staying loose", a practice that continues to this day. Witness the first to become lost in the desert wastes—"Smokey" Donohue and Lt. Anderson. They were attempting to inspect the guard after a night of it. Even Col. Lee, then but a lowly 2nd Lt. in 87, was in the habit of sitting on "Smokey's" stomach to wake him up for an early flight. The first two times the good Sgt's face was a picture of surprise, fright and bewilderment in rapid succession.

The old desert rats set off for LG No. 150 at Gazala in a never-to-be-forgotten convoy. Contrary to popular conception of the land, it rained violently, and we were without tents. To make things worse the squadron was formed into patrols and alerted for jerries supposedly landed from a submarine. Nothing materialized, and Lt. Miller and other pilots who went out ahead, diverted their attention to successful scrounging of the precious beer ration allotted to "B" party, and our dear friends of the 57th Group. There was much weeping without beers to weep in.



*"Scrappy" briefing pilots at "Capo", Febr. '44*

When a Spitfire crashed in flaming mass into Ops trailer at Daraugh, "Smokie's" nerves were ruined for further overseas duty. The poor lad was within, and even unto V-E day the dropping of a stone on the roof was cause for panic.

On to Castel Benito where vino "flowed like wine" and all of Ops was, as was then aptly said, "In the bag".

Major Bane briefed our first combat mission. The scene was Causeway, the atmosphere in Ops tense.

One could see the excitement and nervous strain in the faces of the pilots. And at the end of his talk, when all was done that could be done on the ground to make the mission a success, the major very dramatically said, "Give 'em hell!", just like in the movies.

One night at Causeway, Clough dozed at his C.Q. post, dreaming of pre-war conquests, when the "Limey" ack-ack battery nearby cut loose with one loud, unexpected burst. Clough dived madly in the direction of his foxhole, but a dastardly tent rope intervened. Soon he was hopelessly entangled and there was nothing to do but cringe and "sweat out" the end



*S-2 and S-3 boys at 'Pomig", May '44*

of the raid. Later it was learned the target was a lone British Wellington, which was severely damaged. That was war!

The Ops party and Major Bane, on the way to Fauconnerie, wandered in circles in the desert for hours. Soon after arrival at the base, some jerries, also strolling about in the desert, straggled into camp and were promptly taken prisoner. Schuster professed a knowledge of German and was assigned the interrogation. It soon turned out the krauts were asking more questions than the interrogators and had to be declared winners.

Our own private little war got started at Kairouan when some of the more exuberant pilots, notably Lt's. Anderson, Adair and Jaslow started setting off captured jerry ammunition—grenades, rifle ammo, mortar shells, everything—in and near ops. Though Lt. Talmadge (the ass't S-2) and Major Bane took a very dim view of this, they were booby trapped daily.

At Cape Bon the boys hit the jackpot.—Fifteen enemy fighters destroyed on a single mission. Our only casualty, Lt. McArthur, bailed out into the sea, and was eventually picked up and returned to base via walrus, destroyer and jeep. He destroyed four and damaged two on this show. Lt. Talmadge had difficulty trying to evaluate claims. Everyone talked at once and the room was full of flying hands—"There I was on my back . . " It was finally unraveled and it turned out that Col. Grogan had even gotten an ME-109 by ramming it with a wing tip.

At Cape Bon, Dowd and Capt. Gossick swam out to scrounge from an "Eyetie" patrol boat sunk in the shallow water offshore. They beat a hasty retreat when one of our destroyers opened up with its five-inch guns.

The end of the campaign in N. Africa sent us back to Causeway to re-fit for the invasion of Sicily. Every free moment we spent in nearby Zarzis, racing back and forth in captured vehicles. One day we were sent to search for German paratroops supposedly hiding out in Wog villages. No jerries were found, but six or eight Wog women will never forget the sight presented by "Desperate" Double as he burst into their room, pipe clenched firmly in teeth, carrying a wicked looking Tommy gun.

After we hit the beaches at Sicily, we set up shop at Cassibile, and Schuster dug a fox hole. He spent days in its construction, then late one afternoon an ME-109 came over and started its strafing pass in direct line with the ops tent. Schuster was separated from his masterpiece by a brick wall, but he took a head-long dive into a mud puddle in an attempt to reach it. Everyone else hugged the ground where they lay and prayed, and miraculously the jerry stopped his fire only a few feet away. There was much digging after this.

Dillon, who had stayed in Tripoli with "C" party, received a royal welcome when he joined us again at Palagonia. Reason: He brought six quarts of Gordon's Gin with him, wrapped up in shirts, jackets, and the like. Ah, fully many and glorious were the nights spent drinking warm gin and juice in the Sicilian almond orchards.

First weeks on the Italian mainland were a series of leap-frogging moves from one strip to another. When we finally reached Foggia No. 3, we were rejoined by "Smokie" Donahue, after six months in the hospital due to a knee injury received in a fall at Daraugh.

Next, Madna and mud; and the picture of Dillon sitting in the kitchen one night, disgustedly watching the storm scatter papers and equipment from Ops toward the Adriatic. He'd been sleeping there and then, after futile attempts to hold down the tent in the high wind, had grown philosophic and let nature take its course. There was he thanksgiving celebration when Capt. Shapira did a trapeze act on the tent pole in the club, and Capt. Owen (the Ops officer) had to be persuaded by Col. Lee not to take off in his P-40 to strafe "Group".

"Red Dog" Ermis started things off with a bang at Capodichino by setting his tent afire with a home-made bomb. Here originated the custom of keeping a bottle of cognac in Ops. Capt. "Butch" Owen would send Shuttleworth to the officer's club for a bottle in the afternoon when flying for the day was almost completed. Then he and Shuttleworth, Dowd, Dillon and Shapira would settle down in an attempt to "stay loose". Clough, Double, and "Dom" Rossi usually remained aloof from these sessions.

Pomigliano was our last field in the Naples area. There Capt. Petermann (our new Ops officer) took to the way of all flesh and Ops profited by his generosity in American blends.

Soon, along came Corsica and the pre-"D-day" build up. Dowd and Shapira were blown off their feet when a bomb-carrying "47" crashed near ops, and then later "Scrappy" had his famous mix-up with a wall on the road to town when he fell asleep at the wheel of a jeep. The wall still stands; "Scrap" went to the hospital.

En route to Valence in the glorious days in France Capt. Shapira met "Piggy". It was on the bridge at Avignon, and "Scrap" was very well treated as befitted a Harvard man. But on his return visit he found that she had been arrested for collaboration. France was a never-to-be-forgotten experience. We were sad to leave even if the tent we put up at Lyon for Ops one night, had completely disappeared the next morning.

Back to Italy! Iesi! Mud! And the beginning of the last, long winter. Fortunately we moved to Fano and winter quarters before the real cold set in. Here "Smokie" had a re-take on his desert experiences when a South African P-51 "augered in" near Ops, and we began "sweating out" the long missions to Yugoslavia and Southern Austria. The Adriatic was a mighty frosty place to sail a dinghy.

The beginning of spring found us in Cesenatico, about as close to the front as we could get, waiting for the last big push. At last it came, and after three weeks of maximum operations in close support, V-E day arrived. Clough came back from T.D. in the States after having left just two days too early for all the celebrating there.

And so it was "over, over here". Redeployment was now our big concern. The road from Alamein had ended.



S/Sgt. Arnold P. CLOUGH
Malden, Mass.

S/Sgt. Charles A. DONAHUE
Marysville, Pa.
Bronze Star Medal

S/Sgt. Arthur J. DOWD
Arlington, Mass.

Sgt. Sam M. FREEDMAN
Chicago, Ill.

**NOT PICTURED:**

Sgt. Raymond DILLON
S/Sgt. Wesley C. DOUBLE New Castle, Pa.

# Kitchen

If all of the Spam cooked by the 87th Mess were laid to form an oblong it would make a 6500 foot airstrip! This enlightening piece of information, laboriously compiled by Group Stat, indicates the magnitude of the task recently completed by our kitchen.

Spam, and its bed-fellows—Bully-Beef, M and V and "C" Ration—were first introduced as weapons during the dark and sandy days at L.G. 174. Here, from the rather tired E.P.I.P. tent that housed the kitchen our first overseas meals emerged. They were "delicious", perhaps because of the manner of preparation; although some of us had strong suspicions that the food—or rather lack of it—of the Mauretania and Kasfareet might have sharpened appetites somewhat.

Cooking at 174, as at most of the later fields, was an unpredictable occupation. Tents frequently succumbed to wind and rain, and usually chose meal times to come billowing down. The resulting snarl of cooks, pans, pots and utensils had to be set aright before feeding could proceed, and this naturally would not enhance the pleasure of the meal, nor the personalities of the cooks.

Field stoves were a definite occuaptional hazard, and could be relied upon to explode periodically. It is an inexperienced cook who has not been forced to retreat from the kitchen at least once. This caused some concern at first, but no real damage ever resulted. Eventually, most of us, upon hearing an explosion would usually pass it off with: "must be the kitchen blowing up again", and not even bother to investigate.

The separation of the squadron into "A" and "B" parties doubled the mess problem, particulary while on the road. It was not unusual for the mess truck to become lost, and some of the more confirmed chow hounds choose to become lost with it.

Upon arrival at a new field the kitchen tent was, naturally, the first to be erected. This meant that mess personnel got a much later start with their personal tents than the remainder of the party; "shoofti" trips around the new location were also curtailed for the same reason. One means of avoiding this was to go to the local water point; consequently the water bowser would often stray far afield, and it has been suspected that water was not the only commodity carried on these trips.

In the early days, before G. I. bread became available, Medley turned out a very acceptable substitute. He was a good baker—skilled and industrious, but etceedingly temperamental about his product, which became quite hard after a few days, and proved to be a deadly missile when thrown at critics.

"Granny" Wiggs, famous for his puddings, had the incredible knack of making all of them—walnut, maple, vanilla, butterscotch, etc—taste like chocalate. This made every meal an adventure.

Back in Africa, and during the early days in Sicily and Italy, well-ordered ration dumps were unknown, and the haphazard delivery of supplies enormously handicapped cooking. A good deal of ingenutiy was exercised by such kitchen personnel as Raleigh, Williams and Hassler, to supplement our unstimulating diet. "Scrounging" never reached greater perfection than achieved by this trio. They could load a jeep with "V" cigarettes and "C 2" ration, head it into the desert, and return laden with eggs, melons, etc. What Lawrence was to Arabia, they were to Libya and Tunisia—and every Wog from Alex to Cape Bon had a cheery "Egges" for them.

The more fertile areas of Sicily and Italy made procuring of local rations less strenuous. In fact, it was not unusual for an obliging cow to wander into camp and accidentally shoot itself while doing the manual of arms with a Springfield.



Mess crew
Pomigliano,
May '44





Fresh meat
Madna, Nov. '43



Working mess kits
Cesenatico, April '45



First rations at LG 174



Jesi mud, Nov. '44



Niessen hut going up, Cesenatico, Apr. '45

Turkeys and chickens too had a habit of strolling through the camp and cutting their throats on axe blades, and this tended toward a more varied mess.

Capt. Fogle, our extremely observant mess officer back in southern Italy, once found a robust young pig that became so homesick it committed suicide by throwing itself into a barbecue pit.

Not all of the supplemental rations were quite so simply come by, however, and scrounging missions frequently required a good deal of skill and persistance. "Red" Cuppettli struck his element when we reach Sicily, and his ability to speak fluent "Eyetie" made many lucrative deals possible.

All the way from Alemein to the Alps, food, along with "vino" and "the signorini", was the thing of primary importance to all of us. We were really "cöotems with gas ou the ferat bumen" all the way, but we are fairly sure we'd not do it again.



Sgt. Thomas W. BEDDALL
Seattle, Wash.

Cpl. Albert CUPPETELLI
Detroit, Mich.

Cpl. Roger C. FLYNN
Ft. Wadworth, N. Y.

Sgt. Harold C. H. HASSLER
Rockingham, N. C.

Cpl. Dennis A. HIPPS
Morganton, N. C.

Sgt. Edw. E. KWIATKOWSKI
Markesan, Wis.



Pfc. Herbert H. MANEVAL
Jersy Shore, Pa.

Cpl. Leonard P. MANGINELLI
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Cpl. Fred L. MINOR
Altus, Okla.

Cpl. Frank J. H. RYMENAMS
Racine, Wis.

S Sgt. Stephen P. SAJ
Springfield, Mass.

Sgt. Marcel L. THUILLIER
Lowell, Mass.



Pfc. Lewis M. WEBB
Nashville, Tenn.

Sgt. Leonard P. WIGGS
Marshfield, Ore.

**NOT INDIVIDUALLY PICTURED:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Cpl. Rae BOONE | San Francisco, Calif. |
| Cpl. Raymond J. GUTKOWSKI | Milwaukee, Wis. |
| Cpl. Leonard LESLIE | Webster, Mass. |
| Cpl. Lewis E. MEDLEY | Roanoke, Va. |
| S.Sgt. Charles L. RALEIGH | Macon, Ga. |
| Cpl. Robert C. Taylor | |
| Sgt. Charles R. VINT | Fredricksburg, Va. |
| Sgt. Walter B. H. Williams, Jr. | |
| Pfc. John I. YOUNG | Newark, N. Y. |

# Medics



At L. G. 150, Libya, February '43

The original "Mad Medics" of 87 Squadron embarked in October 1942 for lands unknown — which turned out to be Egypt. Between trips to Cairo and Alexandria we soon acclimated ourselves to desert life and warfare. Here Pfc. Robert Reilley transferred to a hospital unit in Cairo and was replaced by Cpl. Leon Westerfield.

Our primary job, of course, was to tend to the wounded and ill. We manned the crash-crew with our ambulance, held daily sick call, hung out our green lights in town, and saw to squadron sanitation—which during the campaigns in Africa and Italy proved to be a major problem in engineering.

It was at Tripoli-Castel Benito airdrome, that the Squadron dispensary became famous for serving the finest drink of the day, namely "Dago Red". This, we believe, is the same substance used in the Army's new incendiary bomb.

We passed through Tunis in fine shape, and after "sweating out" Cape Bon and Causeway (t w i c e !), soon found ourselves on the ancient fortress of Malta. We never did set up a dispensary there, but the "Skeeters" could always find a medical man on Strait Street if they were in need of an aspirin or other simple service.

In Sicily, "Bottom Land" Knox and "Bootleg" Henslee became famous for their surgical prowess on the local steers. Through their efforts many cups of tongue-broth were enjoyed on the "Morning after".

Cpl. Knox transferred to 12th TAC while we were at Madna, Italy. As we worked northward close behind the front and eventually to Naples, Capt. "Two-Gun" Magness kept giving fatherly talks to the men of the Squadron. At Naples Cpl. "Lucky" Turner left us to return to the States—long will we remember his Dog calls at midnight.

While we were boarding the boat for Corsica "Lushwell" Quinn and "Doc" Merriman just made it by running up the gangplank as the boat was pulling out. Once settled on the island, the squadron was confronted by a great mystery. It seems the medics were always talking about "Ethyl", but there was never a visible girl. Eventually the secret was discovered when "Gabby" Brazelton was found guarding the refrigerator full of fruit juice.



Medics at "Pomig", May '44

On Corsica also, "Hair" Houde, "Where is the nearest one" Weatherford, "Gabby" Brazelton, and "Two Gun" Magness became "Group Poops". Capt. Magness was replaced by Capt. "No Middle Initial" Shane, who was soon to be seen tripping through the weeds each midnight checking on the mosquito nets in the E.M.'s tents.

Shortly after "D-Day" the remains of the Medics set sail for France. — "Doc" Merriman, "Jeff" Quinn, and "Bootleg"—three sadists who kept very busy needling




*Bredice & Buddy — Cesenatico, April '45*

the boys. Our duties in France were light, so quite naturally social activity was unlimited. There was always an abundance of nurses (French, of course) on hand, which made the dispensary a very popular hangout. It was in a small town north of Valence that "Luss" Quinn made a grand entrance into the front room of a private house with his ambulance; the Frenchman had to build a new house.

After giving our hearts to the French, we were ordered back to Italy, to Jesi and the ultimate in mud. Here Capt. Shane was replaced by Capt. "Luige" O'Connor, and after slipping, sliding and sloshing about for two months, we pulled our aspirins out of the slime and moved north to Fano.



*Conditions like these took time off our hands*

At Fano, "Doc" Merriman received his Bronze Star for meritorious achievement in evacuating the sick and wounded during eight campaigns. Shortly thereafter, he was sent home on temporary duty, and, with the advent of VE day, remained there.

We celebrated the end of the war in Europe at Cesenatico. Shortly afterward, Cpl. Henslee was transferred home. Of the original "Mad Medics", the one-man department, Cpl. Jeff Quinn remained.

If you ever need medical aid in civilian life, look up one of the former 87th medics—they're unique.



Cpl. John J. QUINN, Jr.
Waltham, Mass.

**MEDICS NOT INDIVIDUALLY PICTURED :**

| | |
|---|---|
| Cpl. William J. HENSLEE | Rabun Gap, Ga. |
| Pfc. Russell H. HOUDE | |
| T/5 James M. KNOX | |
| S/Sgt. Alexander H. MERRIMAN | Bristol, Conn. |
| Cpl. Wallace H. TURNER | Cleveland, Ga. |
| Cpl. Leon H. WEATHERFORD | Darlington, S.C. |

# Q.M. *Supply & Transportation*

It was a strange group of GI's that drove into Naples in British Dodge trucks and clothed in British battle dress. After many months overseas it was our first time as an American outfit in the strictly U.S. section of the fighting zone, and our attire told the story of how Q.M. Supply had operated back in the desert. We were walking examples of reverse lend-lease. Safely landed in Egypt, our immediate concern had been for the equipment and supplies we had so carefully packed, painted and stenciled back in the States. When would it arrive? It never did.

Looking back, landing ground 174 and nearby Alexandria recalls Cpl. John Ash's famous rides on the town's trolley cars, "Buck" Weaver's cordial relations with the British M.P.'s, that flying officer who was afraid to sleep in the supply tent alone because of "the jitters" acquired on muchbombed Malta, and the sand storms which forced personnel of the outlying Q.M. department to "fly the wire beam" (the telephone lines) into the mess hall so as not to end up in one of the other squadron areas. Then the long, bumpy trip to Daraugh with the trailer load of camouflage nets which served as mattresses on that trip for Lt. Weinheimer, Lt. Warner, and the Supply Section. Does anyone remember the final disposition of those much-cursed nets?

Castel Benito was famous for the red wine slightly tainted with gasoline from the containers used to haul it from the winery. At Causeway (first time), our Sgt. of the guard, Sgt. Ashly, made history by driving a jeep into a foxhole while looking in the murky night for the beer-bottle supposed to mark the tent of a man to be awakened for the next guard shift.

One of our boys will not soon forget Fauconnerie and Kairouan. Many were the hours he toted a bag of rocks around the area on his back as punishment for overstaying a pass in Tunis. At Causeway (second time) there came that Roman Holiday for all hands when several back order requisitions caught up with us all at once. Clothing lay scattered over the ground. All of these places bring back visions of Cpl. Julious Zusman's prowess at black jack and poker and his famous "morning after" reports on the outcome.

Came Sicily and the mainland of Italy in fairly quick succession. S/Sgt. Ashley eventually learned to sleep in his fox hole at Syracuse rather than run back and forth from bed to shelter during the frequent "flak storms" and raids. Palagonia recalls old Juan, the Italian who owned the barn and vineyard next door to the Q.M. tent. The scene from our front door often included the figure of an individual toppling over on one of his frequent briefing trips to squadron operations. Then Termoli, the terrific shortage of candles and the feasts in Asher's tent with S/Sgt. Drum as M.C.

Naples and Capodochino airport was the place where "Eyetie" kids relieved the department of quite a few cases of "C" rations by putting a ladder up to the stone wall next to Q.M. and raiding the trailers in the early morning. The almost-nightly after-supper trips to Naples, the parties with the toilettissue napkins, the trips to the San Carlo opera, the two Italian characters who worked in Supply—all these things bring back Naples.

"Skeeter" monk, who so delighted in chewing up cigarettes and knocking down mosquito bars, was acquired at Pomigliano. There too, was held that famous party. The lone candle burning on the table the next morning had the power of a searchlight shining in the eyes of one of our members. Oh, that terrible bright light!

Then Corsica—our fresh-water swimming hole and hours spent chasing "Skeeter" monk through the trees. Then France, where everyone had a good time. That hitch hiker who turned out to be the owner of a man-

sion . . . the Jerry trailer used to haul the supply boxes up to Lyon was a one trip vehicle and like the famous one-horse shay, gave up all at once . . . back to Italy and the mud-hole at Jesi where the power lines fell on the supply tent and gave everyone a scare; Fano, and the departure of Cpl. John Ash for the States, soon followed by T/Sgt. Pisher. And finally Cesenatico, and the end of the war.

The things remembered are the good things, and forgotten is the long hardness of the road. Such was the life of 87th's section of the "meanest men in the Army", the personnel of the Quartermaster Supply.

## Q.M. SUPPLY



Cpl. John L. ASH
Somerville, Mass.

S Sgt. George A. ASHLEY
Ogdensburg, N.Y.

Sgt. Robert L. MOORE
Cortland, N.Y.

Cpl. Julius ZUSMAN
Cincinnati, O.

T/Sgt.
Herman G. ASHER
New York, N.Y.

## TRANSPORTATION



Cpl. Edward F. CASEY
Portland, Me.

Pfc. Robert L. CREEK
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Cpl. Harlen N. JOHNSTONE
Kemp, Tex.

S Sgt. Arthur L. PHILLIPS
Buford, Ga.

Cpl. John P. RENDON
Pueblo, Col.

S Sgt. Bruce H. ROLLINSON
Swartz, La.

Cpl.
Henry W. BUSCH



Cpl. Robert E. SAUNDERS
Honeoye Falls, N.Y.

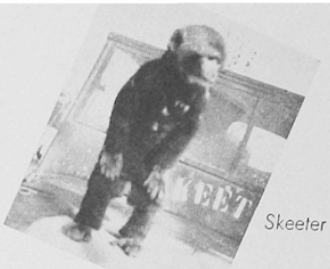
Pfc. Ellwyn D. SHANKLES
Ft. Payne, Ala.

Cpl. Chas. V. ZIGMANTANIS
Sugar Notch, Pa.

Sgt.
Earl J. TRAFTON
Richmondville, N.Y.



Motor pool, Jesi, Dec. '44



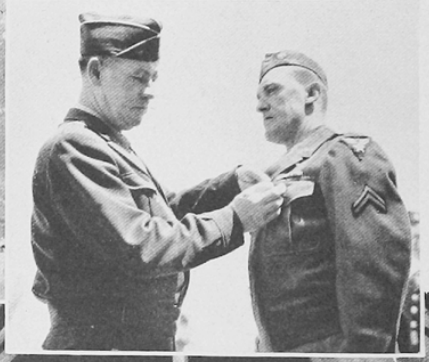
Skeeter monk



Jesi, Dec. '44



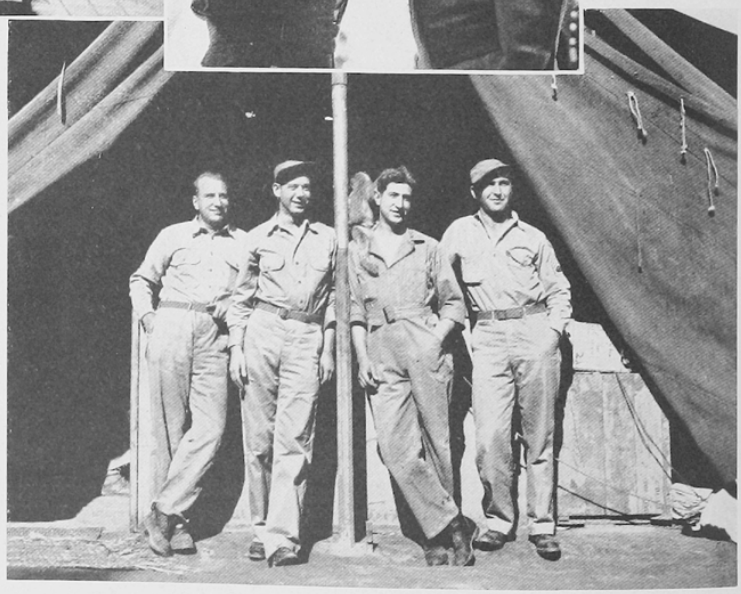
Transportation Section Pomigliano, May '44



'Ziggy' getting Soldier' medal, Cesenatico '44



"Geonge" Poper Vendon at 174, with H. Farmer, Randolph Tex Thompson, Haynes



At Pomigliano, June '44

# Skeeter Snaps



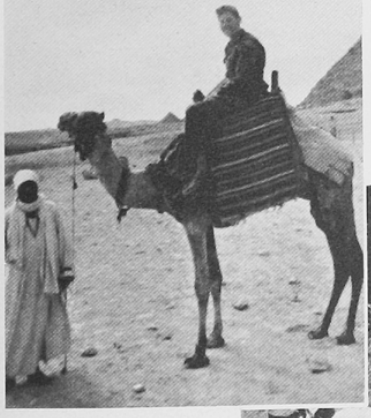
Klimesh, Erickson, Beam, Burnett and Friend



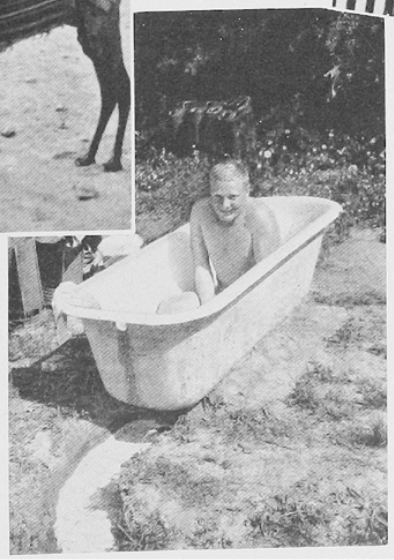
Merriman and Houde, Libya, Feb. '43



"Alex" Pass



Goldfarb "up", Jan. '43



Bates, McArthur, Rogers, Berinati, and Watkins appraising flak-damaged "Hawk", Palagonia, August '43

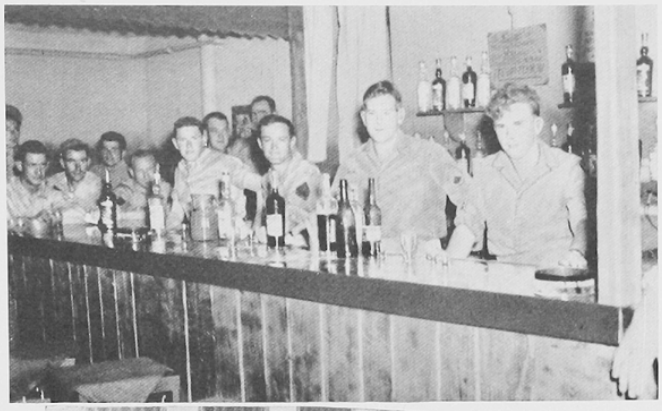




"E.M." Club at "Pomig", May '44



"E.M." Club at "Pomig", May '44



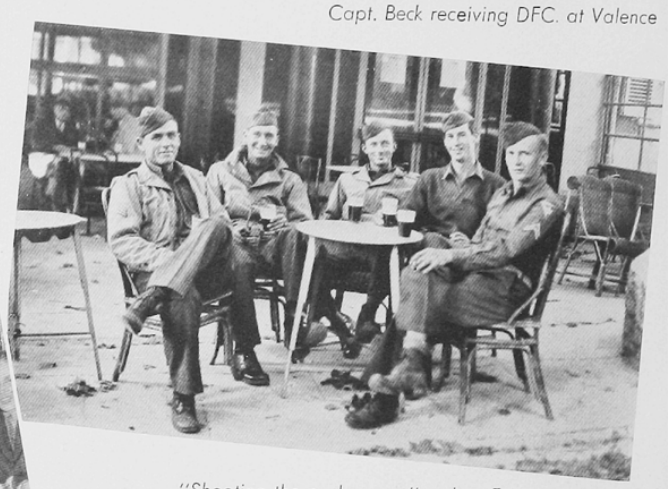
"E. M." Bar "Pomig"



Capt. Beck receiving DFC. at Valence



Officers' Bar Naples '44



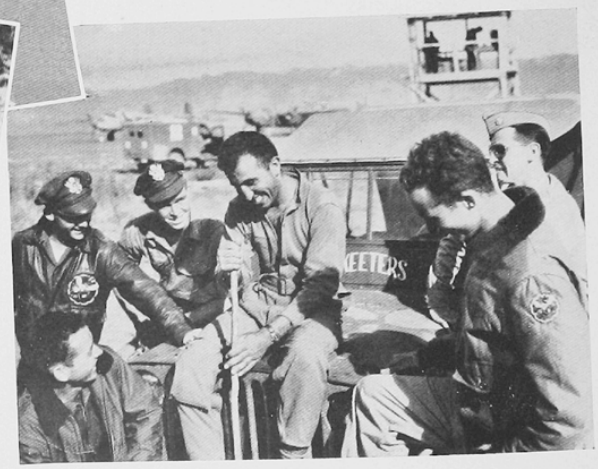
"Shooting the parley-vous", salon, France



Open house Naples '44




Sgt. Lankford and Skeeter, Corsica



Lt. Bagian recounts escape from P-47 and germans, Valence, Sept. '44



Big league ball players visit, Dec. '44

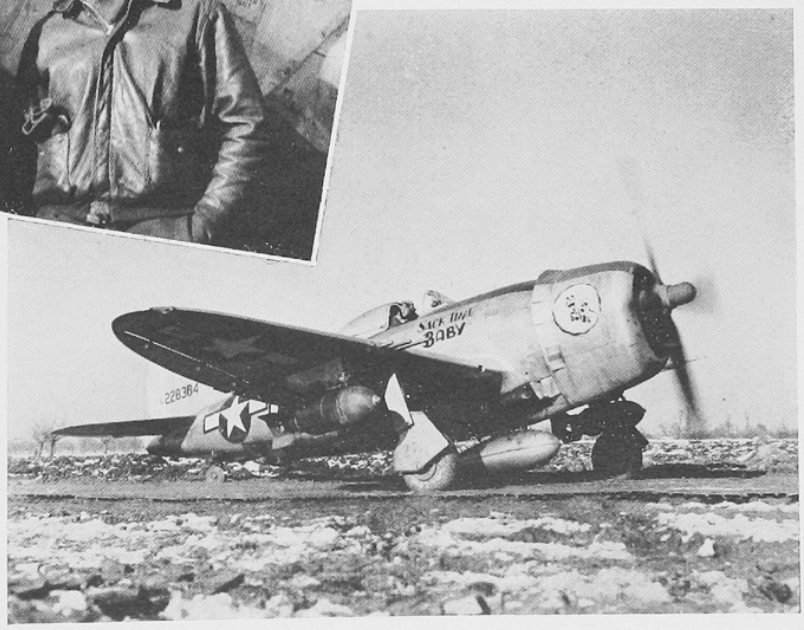





Snow in January

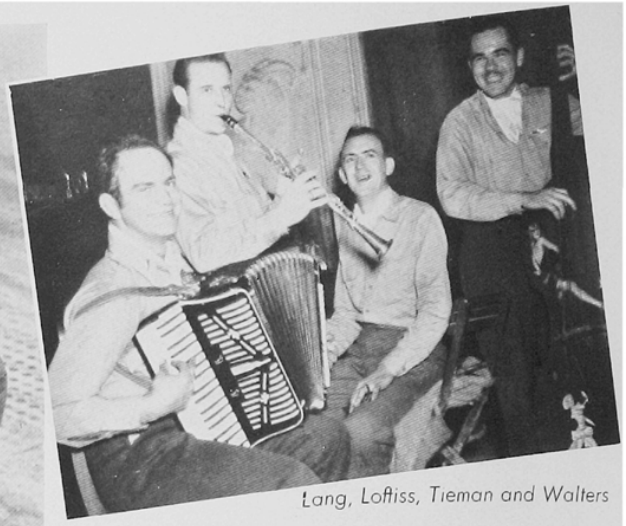


Lt. Col. Martin and Tom Drummond




Sack-Time Baby awaiting tower signal





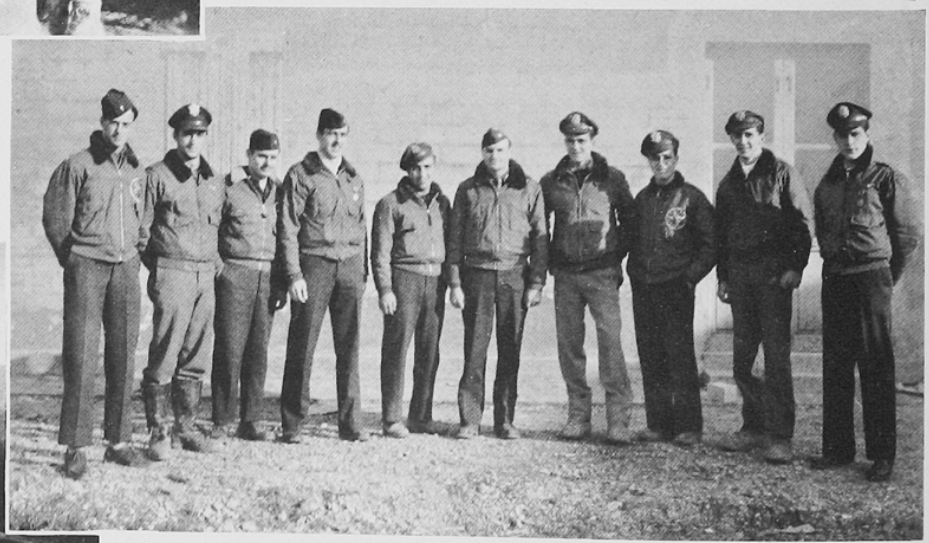
Lang, Loftiss, Tieman and Walters

Clear day at Fano



Coffee bull-session, Feb. '45





Col. Pinkston & Pilots, Mar. '45



Lt. Williams after Udine "Show", Mar. '45



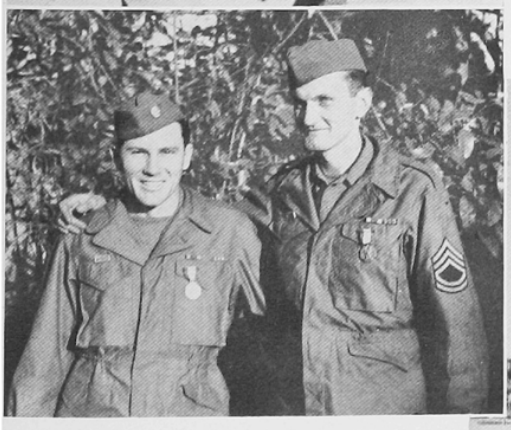
Gen. Myers presents Silver Star to Capt. Bagian



Lt. Dieffenderfer back safe after Catching up with his own



Capt. Bagian's Beach-Buzz-Job



Beam and Brazelton win Soldiers Medal



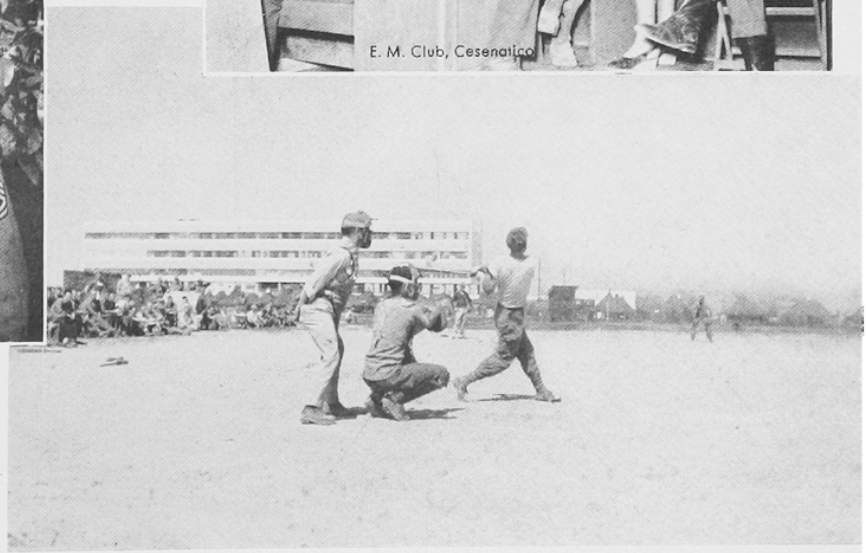
Dance on the Beach Terrace, April 1945



Gen. Myers pins Silver Star on Maj. Cassidy



E. M. Club, Cesenatico



Flynn striking out in April

# 79th Carries On –

## OCCUPATION LIFE IN AUSTRIA

On July 26th, 1945, our P-47's were making their final take-offs from their last war-time airfield at Cesenatico, Italy. GIs wearing sun-tans swarmed into B-25's and C-47's. With mixed feelings they waved farewell to sunny Italy; two hours later, the 79th was in Austria, and the GIs were changing into wools to go with the cool, cloudy weather. The vehicles arrived in convoy a week later, via the Brenner Pass.



*Our M/T convoy, via the Brenner Pass, first saw Austria from this autobahn*

With quite a number of combat veterans still in the Group, we fook up our occupational post on the Hörsching Air Base in the outskirts of Linz, Austria, on the Danube. The idea was to discourage any resistance from die-hard Nazis, particularly in the mountains, where foot-troops would have a tough time patrolling.



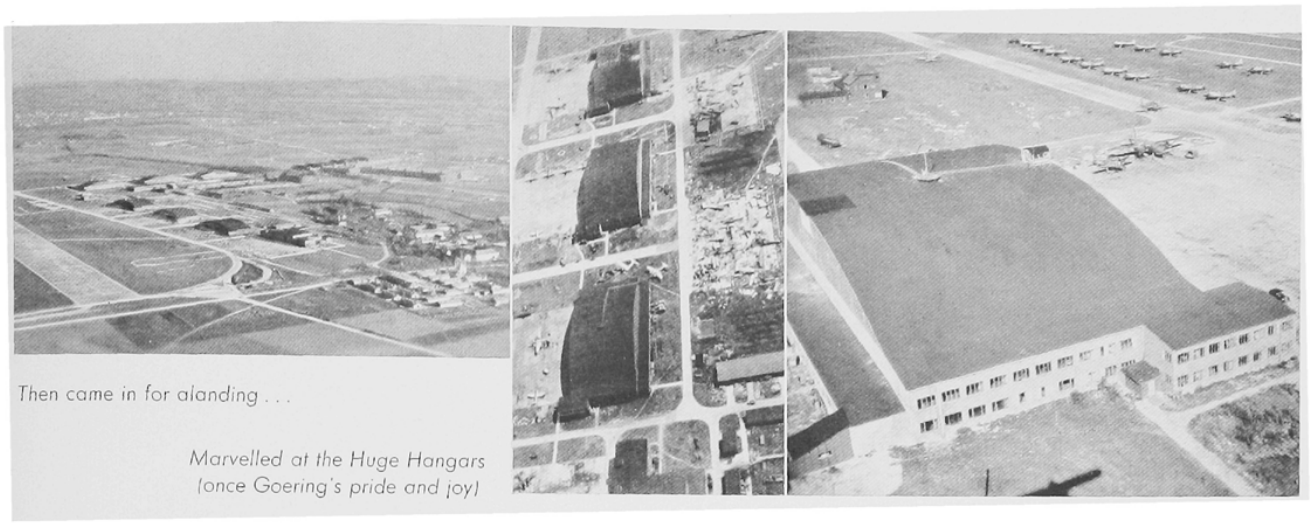
*The air echelon spotted the not-so-blue Danube in a very green countryside*

Hörsching airbase had served as convalescent hospital for thousands of starved concentration-camp victims and other displaced persons, since shortly after V-E Day. About five hundred still remained, and these shuffled their weary skeletons to our messhall doors each mealtime, and "queued-up" patiently in long lines to wait for left-overs. Contrary to convalescent feeding-rules, knowing the extra food would probably do them more harm than good, we could not refuse. Our own appetites diminished those several weeks, haunted as we were by the abject appeal in those deep-sunken eyes,—the horror of the distended bellies , the bony limbs, the scraggly hair, the grey-blue faces. They were ghostmen. They rarely spoke, even to each other, and when they did, it was with unnatural sounds, the tongue fearful and unaccustomed. They reached out their improvised mess-gear—tin cans, glass jars, old pails, whatever they could find—with palsied hands, stared with fanatical absorption at the food as it was ladled out; then, without once taking their eyes from the food in their possession, would hobble a few feet away, gulping the food as they went. Here was not propaganda; here was the reason we had left home.



*This swimming pool was too cold, but the billets proved too hot for comfort*

Without having a chance to get its feet on the



*Then came in for alanding . . .*

*Marvelled at the Huge Hangars (once Goering's pride and joy)*

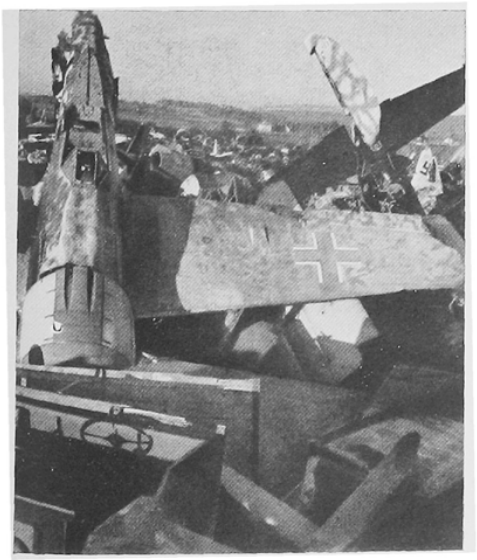
ground, the Group ran into a hornet's nest of international intrigue when Pierre Laval, who was later to be executed for treason to France, landed on the strip. In a JU-188 flown from Barcelona, Spain by two Luftwaffe pilots. The base swarmed with "brass" and reporters; for weeks afterward, the men were swamped with clippings out of papers and magazines in the States, showing the 79th "capturing" Monsieur Laval.

A few weeks later, a couple of atom bombs were dropped on Japan, and Russia came into the war. The combat was over, but the big fight was on for most of the GIs—the fight to get back into civilian clothes;—and that took top rank in bull-sessions from there on. Talk of winning the peace was okay for the newspapers, but the chances were 99-to-1 that any two GIs talking, were comparing points.

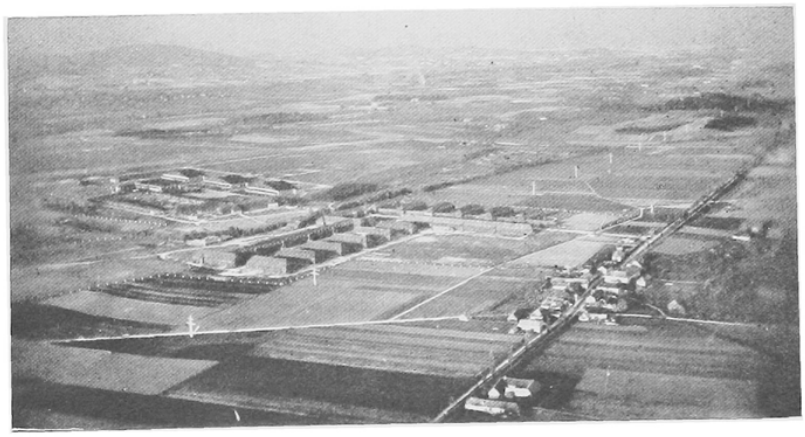
Once in Austria, we learned to say "fraulein" instead of "signorina", but we continued to use part-Italian, part-French, part-German, on the theory that if it wasn't American, the foreigners should be able to understand it. Shortly after we got here, General Eisenhower gave up the fraternization ban as a bad job. That made it legal, anyway.

Quarters were good, hangars and air field were "out of this World"—and best of all, we had plenty of PW labor to do the heavy work, cleaning up the area, and DDT-ing the buildings. What with steam-heat, hot and cold running water—well, we never had it so good.

Things looked up, too, when we employed fraulein's to wait on tables, and chow came in plates instead of mess kits. Movies were shown in an indoor



*The wrecked axis planes, and sprawling barracks*









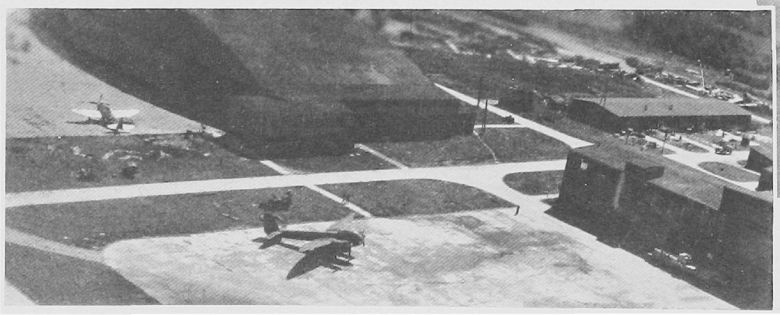
*In August 45, Pierre Laval, French politician wanted for nazi collaboration, flew in from Barcelona, Spain, to give himself up to American authorities. His wife accompanied him.*





*These former Luftwaffe pilots flew the plane*





*Which, for the Record, was a Ju. 188*



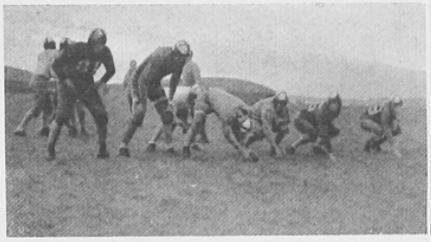
We began to Clean House

I + E renewed the study program

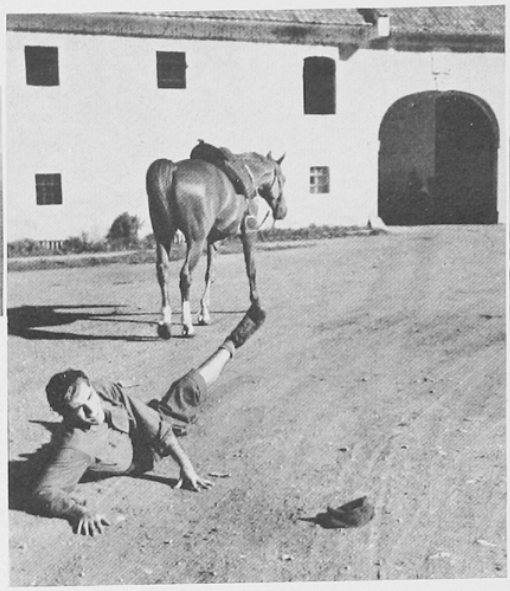
General Eisenhower and General Clark "dropped in" - - -

So did our "old boss" general "uncle Joe" cannon (here entertained by C.O. Lt. Col. Martin and deputy C.O. Lt. Col. Robertson)

Our first "P-X" was opened



There was a football league - -



Riding on Hungarian cavalry horses - - -



"Goode bookes for to reade" - -



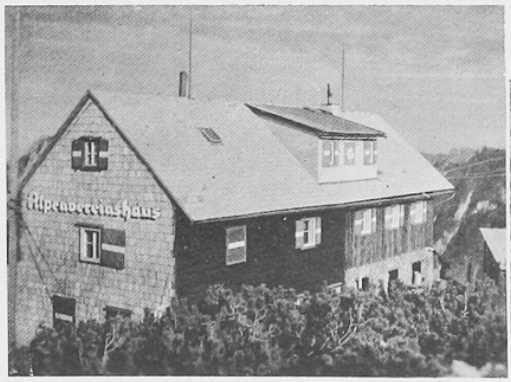
Tours to Hitler's "Eagle's Nest" at Berchtesgaden



And a hunting and skiing mountain retreat of our own at Feuerkogel, reached by cable-car from Ebensee



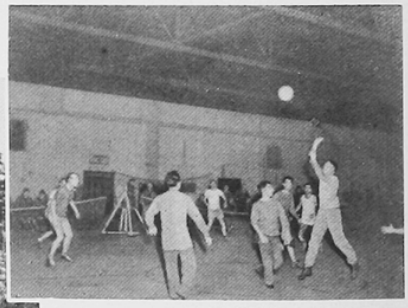

With lodges for officers



And enlisted men - - both looking down on the former Nazi concentration camp at Ebensee — which now confined SS prisoners



There was week-end boating, swimming, hunting and fishing at once-fashionable lake Attersee - - -



A "hot" basketball circuit at the base




*Forced to find a new Ski-Lodge, we selected Mitterndorf*



*and Tauplitz Mountain in the famous Salz-kammergut of southern Austria*







*and, of course, we had to "KEEP 'EM FLYING"*







theatre each night, and transportation to and from Linz was set up. Two Red Cross girls came to the base to operate a doughnut shop and library; hunting and skiing lodges were set up for both officers and enlisted men, the latter drawing the hunting lodge of the late Emporer Franz Joseph, near Ebensee. Riding, football, basketball, and baseball were freely indulged in. But even with furloughs to France, England, and Switzerland, the men still wanted to go home; and by year's end, most of them had gone, their places filled by "low-pointers" from the States.

The winter was mild, and so were the Austrians. Our occupational duties were not arduous, with flying more or less confined to getting in that flying time. Many pilots assumed "ground jobs" as principal duty, and some even crewed ships. The biggest headache for all was keeping abreast of changing T.O.'s and T.E.'s, yet a semblance of stability was maintained under the veteran eye of "indestructible" Lt. Col. "Johnny" Martin, one of the original "desert rats" and Group C. O. this past year.

In the Fall of '45, Col. Martin met and wooed Miss Mary McElroy, American Red Cross girl from Latrobe, Pa. On 30 March 1946, they were married in the lovely village Church of Traun, Austria, near Hörsching Air Base, obligingly lending our book the sweetly traditional happy ending.

And that's "the Ole Fighting 79th" as this editor leaves it, for a date with a tweed suit that's been in moth-balls, lo these four long years.

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| POW | — Prisoner of War |
| OLC | — Oak leaf Cluster |
| C.T.C.D. | — Completed tour of combat duty |
| DFC | — Distinguished Flying Cross |
| DSC | — Distinguished Service Cross |
| MIA | — Missing in Action |
| WIA | — Wounded in Action |
| C.O. | — Commanding Officer |
| M/T | — Motor transport |
| A/C | — Aircraft |
| L/G | — Landing Ground |
| A/D | — Airdrome |
| Scrounging | — Foraging unofficially for supplies — for unit or personal use |
| Sortie | — One aircraft completing a combat operational flight |
| Mission | — More than one aircraft (usually a flight of 4 or several flights) completing an assigned combat task |

# NOTES


GERMANY
FRANCE
SWITZERLAND
AUSTRIA
HUNGARY
ROUMANIA
JUGOSLAVIA
BULGARIA
GREECE
TURKEY
CYPRUS
CRETE
CORSICA
SARDINIA
MINORCA
MAJORCA
SICILY
TUNISIA
ALGERIA
TRIPOLITANIA
CYRENAICA
EGYPT
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
BASLE
BERCHTESGADEN
HÖRSCHING A.B.
GRAZ
LYONS
BRON A.D.
VALENCE A.D.
SAN RAPHAEL AIRFIELD
AVIGNON
MARSEILLES
GENOA
PADUA
VENICE
BELGRADE
BUCHAREST
SOFIA
CESENATICO L.G.
FANO L.G.
JESI AIRFIELD
PERUGIA
RIMINI
SERRAGIA A.D.
ROME
ANZIO
MADNA L.G.
FOGGIA #9
PENNY POST
CAPODICHINO
NAPLES
BRINDISI
POMIGLIANO
PISTICCI L.G.
FIRMO L.G.
ISOLA L.G.
PALERMO
MESSINA
PALAGONIA L.G.
CASSIBILE L.G.
MALTA
EL HOUARIA L.G.
ALGIERS
BIZERTA
CAPE BON
BONE
TUNIS
CONSTANTINE
ENFIDAVILLE
SOUSSE
HANI L.G.
KASSERINE
FAUCONNERIE L.G.
SFAX
GAFSA
WADI AKARIT
GUABES
DJERBA
CAUSEWAY L.G.
MARETH
FUARA
TRIPOLI
CASTEL BENITO A.D.
MISURATA
DARRAGH NORTH L.G.
SIRTE
EL AGEILA
BENGHAZI
DERNA
EL GAZALA L.G.
MATRUH
EL ALAMEIN
EL AMIRYA L.G. 174
ALEXANDRIA
PORT SAID
SUEZ
CAIRO
CHARING CROSS
Combat Tour
79th Fighter Group
World War II
Time
November 22 to November 27, 1942
November 28 to January 20, 1943
January 24 to February 1, 1943
February 8 to March 25, 1943
March 27 to April 6, 1943
April 11 to April 16, 1943
April 22 to May 31, 1943
June 1 to June 4, 1943
June 11 to July 1, 1943
July 7 to July 8, 1943
July 10 to July 20, 1943
July 26 to July 30, 1943
July 31 to August 16, 1943
September 13 to September 16, 1943
September 19 to September 26, 1943
September 28 to September 29, 1943
October 1 to October 19, 1943
November 4 to October 19, 1943
January 17 to May 1, 1944
May 1 to June 1, 1944
June 11 to June 19, 1944
August 12 to August 22, 1944
September 22 to September 1, 1944
September 1 to September 1, 1944
September 1 to October 1, 1944
October 1 to December 6, 1944
December 6, 1944 to March 21, 1945
March 21 to July 27, 1945
July 27, 1945 To Indefinite
Place
Heliopolis Egypt
Amiriya, Egypt (L.G.174)
El Gerrawia (L.G.130)
Dekheila North, Trigoletta
Dekheila, Petrella
Le Kroubs, L.G. Algeria
Maison Blanche, L.G. Algeria
El Houaria L.G. Cape Bon Tunisia
Kelibia Airfield, Tunisia
Kairouan Airfield, Tunisia
Sciacca, Sicily
Porcabella, Sicily
Biscari, Sicily
Gela L.G. Sicily
Ponte Olivo, Sicily
Pomigliano, Italy
Pistocci L.G. Italy
Foggia No. 3, Italy
Foggia No. 9, Italy
Tortorella, Italy
Capodichino, Naples, Italy
Serragia, Corsica
San Raphael Airfield, France
Bron Airfield, Lyons, France
Le Valentin Airfield, Lyons, France
Jesi Airfield, Italy
Fano Airfield, Italy
Cesenatico L.G. Italy
Hörsching Airbase, Linz, Austria
SCALE
1:4000000
1 Inch=64 Miles
0
50
100
150
200 Miles

*Supplement to "The Falcon"*
*(An unofficial Publication)*

# ROLL CALL

## Address roster of Men who were with the 79 Fighter Group, U.S.A.A.F. from Activation (1942) to V-J Day (1945)

† Killed in Action, or deceased
** Still listed as Missing in Action on Group records
* Still listed as Prisoner of War on Group records
§ Original Men to come overseas with the Group

AARON, Norman L., 306 Hayward St., Cambridge, Md.
§ ABBOTT, William G., 710 W. 19th St., Austin, Tex.
AcMOODY, Gordon R., R. R. 6, Coldwater, Mich.
§ ADAIR, Asa A., Alderson, W. Va.
ADAMIAK, Joseph R., 297 Elm St., Holyoke, Mass.
§ ADAMS, Henry W., Jr., 16 Bow St., Townsend, Mass.
ADAMS, Stacy E., Gen. Del., Ackerman, Miss.
§ ADCOCK, Orville H., 2416 Seymour Rd., Flushing, Mich.
ADERMAN, Henry, 1709 E. 22nd St., Minneapolis, Minn.
ADKINS, Damon E., Box 724, Oak Hill, W. Va.
ADOZZIO, John J., 2539 Hubbourd St., Brooklyn, N.Y.
§ ADZIMA, Fred, 937 Center St., Racine, Wis.
ALANNI, Louis
§ ALBANO, Angelo R., 238 Merrill Rd., Pittsfield, Mass.
§ ALBERTS, Willard E.
ALDRICH, Donald J., 4611 North Pauline St., Chicago, Ill.
ALDRIDGE, Kenneth R., 919 Lawrence St., Lowell, Mass.
§ ALEXANDER, Harold R., 220 E. 6th St., Redfield, S. D.
ALGER, George T., New York, N.Y.
§ ALLARD, Robert H., Tamarack Lodge, Franconia, N. H.
** ALLEN, Burke F., 206 North Work St., Falconer, N.Y.
§ ALLEN, Ray H., Box 207, Loyall, Ky.
ALLISON, William P., 103 W. Plain St., Minerva, O.
ALLPHIN, Guy M., Arlington, Kans.
§ ALLYN, Harrison S., Caribou, Me.
ALMAND, J. M., Henderson Furniture Co., Henderson, Tex.
ANDERLIK, Thomas J., 1628 Cullerton Ave., Chicago, Ill.
† ANDERSON, Herbert A., Dixon, Mo.
ANDERSON, Jas. E., Jr., 3347 Chevy Chase, Houston, Tex.
**§ ANDERSON, John R., 626 East 2nd St., Jamestown, N.Y.
§ ANDERSON, Leon. C., 2223½ W. Armour St., Seattle, Wash.
ANDERSON, Raymond F., Box 88, Alexandria, Minn.
§ ANDERSON Th. S. 17188 Pierson Ave. Detroit, 19 Mich.
§ ANDERSON, W. D. 108½ S. Vita Ave., Beaver Dam, Wisc.
§ ANDREWS, Edward G., Jr., 309 Jackson St., Durham, N.C.
§ ANGEL, Peter N., RFD 1, Berlin, N.J.
ANGELUS, Berta, 530 Wright St., Almo, Mich.
** ANGYAL, Zoltan Joseph, 215 Monroe St., Bridgeport, Conn.
§ ANTONUCCI, Fred R., 321 Granite St., Braintree, Mass.
APPELL, Hayes L., 3919 Brentwood Ave., Jacksonville, Flo.
APPENZELLER, Robert G., P.O. Box64, Portsmouth, Va.
ARGABRITE, Kenneth F., Spencer, W.Va.
† ARNOLD, Calvin J., RFD 2, Southwick, Mass.
** ASCENZI, Richard, Lakeside Drive, Box 106, Gibsonia, Pa.
§ ASH, John L., 17 Walnut Road, Somerville, Mass.
§ ASHER, Herman G., 504 Grand St., New York, N.Y.
§ ASHLEY, George A., 717 New York Ave., Ogdensburg, N.Y.
AUSTIN, Allan Y., 56 Prospect Ave., Spencerport, N.Y.
AUSTIN, Harry W., 721 Pennwood Ave., Wilkinsburg, Pa.
AUTON, George W., 1231 North 15th St., Birmingham, Ala.
AYER, Elliot D., 101 Campfield Ave., Hartford, Conn.
AYERS, John J., 523 W. Baker St., Flint, Mich.
§ AYLER, William A., Jr., 435 Highland Ave., Kenmore, N.Y.

§ BABCOCK, Rich. L., 44 Mawney St., East Greenwich, R.I.
§ BABINEAU, Edgar G., 339 Brown St., Westbrook, Me.
§ BABULSKY, Leon, RFD 4, Norwich, New London, Conn.
§ BACHETTE, Leonard J., Box 245, Newell, Pa.
BAGIAN, Phillip, 57th 15th N. Fourth St., Philadelphia, Pa.
§ BAILEY, Bill, 1340 SW 28th St., Oklahoma City, Okla.
**§ BAILEY, Perry E.
§ BAILEY, Richard W., 201 E. Pleasant St., Franklin, N. H.
§ BAILOR, J. C., Box 434, Valier, Ill.
BAIR, Merle William, 1519 20th Ave., Altoona, Pa.
§ BAIRD, Charles C., 408 Melville Rd., Hampton, Va.
§ BAKER, Edwin F.
BAKER, Duane S., 141 —8th Ave., Carbondale, Pa.
§ BAKER, Fred L., 5808 Central Ave., Indianapolis, Ind.
§ BAKER, Merle F., Rt. 2, Choctaw, Okla.
BAKER, Thomas M., 61 Indian Field Rd., Greenwich, Conn.
BALA, Mitchell J., 94 Tariff St., Thompsonville, Conn.
§ BALCH, Burton E., 18 Pond St., Ludlow, Vt.
BALEGA, John L., 235 South 4th St., Shamokin, Pa.
§ BALL, Richard M., Royal Oak, Mich.
§ BANE, Eustace H.
BARANELLD, Francis J., 22 Jacoby St., Maplewood, N.J.
§ BARCK, Gordon W., 3479 Amethyst St., Los Angeles, Cal.
§ BARKER, George L., R 3, Moultrie, Ga.
§ BARNES, Clarence A., Jr., 1510 3rd Ave., Dodge City, Kans.
BARNES, Ernest J., Gen. Del., Menan, Id.
BARNETT, Louis G., 126 NW 17 St., Oklahoma City, Okla.
BARRETT, Edw. B., 619 E. University Ave., Ann Arbor, Mich.
BARRIER, Jack M., 617 Sherman St., Emporia, Kans.
BARTLETT, Robert S., 1520 Von Zandt Pl., Dallas, 11, Tex.
† BARTLETT, Stuart L., Lapeer, Mich.
† BARTLEY, Harry E., Sarver, Pa.
§ BATCHELOR, James O., Coushatta, La. (Rte. 2)
§ BATES, Earl E., Jr.
BAUMAN, Harry, 25 Florence Ave., Revere, Mass.
§ BAUMANN, John A., 2498 La Mothe, Detroit, Mich.
§ BAUMANN, Richard J., 534 Summit, Pasadena, Cal.
§ BEAM, Raymond S., Route 1, Bessemer City, N. C.
§ BEARDSLEE, Allan L., 826 N. Hillside, Wichita, Kans.
§ BEATTY, Harry, 1008½ E. 2nd St., Oil City, Pa.
§ BEATY, Ray, Route 5, Charlotte, N. C.
§ BEAUVAIS, Leonard E., 33 Cleveland St., Greenfield, Mass.
BECK, John L., Route 2, Box 183, Post Falls, Id.
BECK, Leonard B., 712 Augustee St., Racine, Wisc.
BECK, Owen L., Pearland, Texas. Box 76
BECKERMAN, Leonard, 4415 W. 14th St., Chicago, Ill.
BEDARD, Edmund, 447 Summer St., West Lynn, Mass.
§ BEDDALL, Thomas W., 7815 1st Ave., Seattle, Wash.
§ BEDFORD, John P., 37 Marion St., Nyack, N.Y.
BEEKS, Carleton J., 636 S. Sycamore St., Monticello, Ia.
† BEERS, George W., 916 Northwood Blvd., Ft. Wayne, Ind.
BEESON, Jack M., Dowden, Walla Walla, Wash.
§ BEESON, Lawrence G., Crawford, Col.
§ BEETHAM, Douglas H.
§ BELL, Aaron S., 25 Oldfields St., Dorchester, Mass.
† BELL, Gordon A., 2901 N. Ninth St., Tacoma, 6, Wash.
* BELL, Rob. B., Stewart Field C-1, Newburgh, N.Y. (M/Sgt.)
BELL, James P., 1619 Green St., Columbia, S.C.
§ BENEDICT, Charles M., 2706 Boll St., Dallas, 4, Tex.
§ BENEDICT, Webster, 24 Youle St., Melrose 76, Mass.
BENITO, Joe M., 1210 18th Ave., Tampa, Flo.
§ BENNET, Harvey C., R R No. 1, Montpelier, Ind.
§ BENSON, Lawrence O., 2241 Albans Rd., Houston, Tex.
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